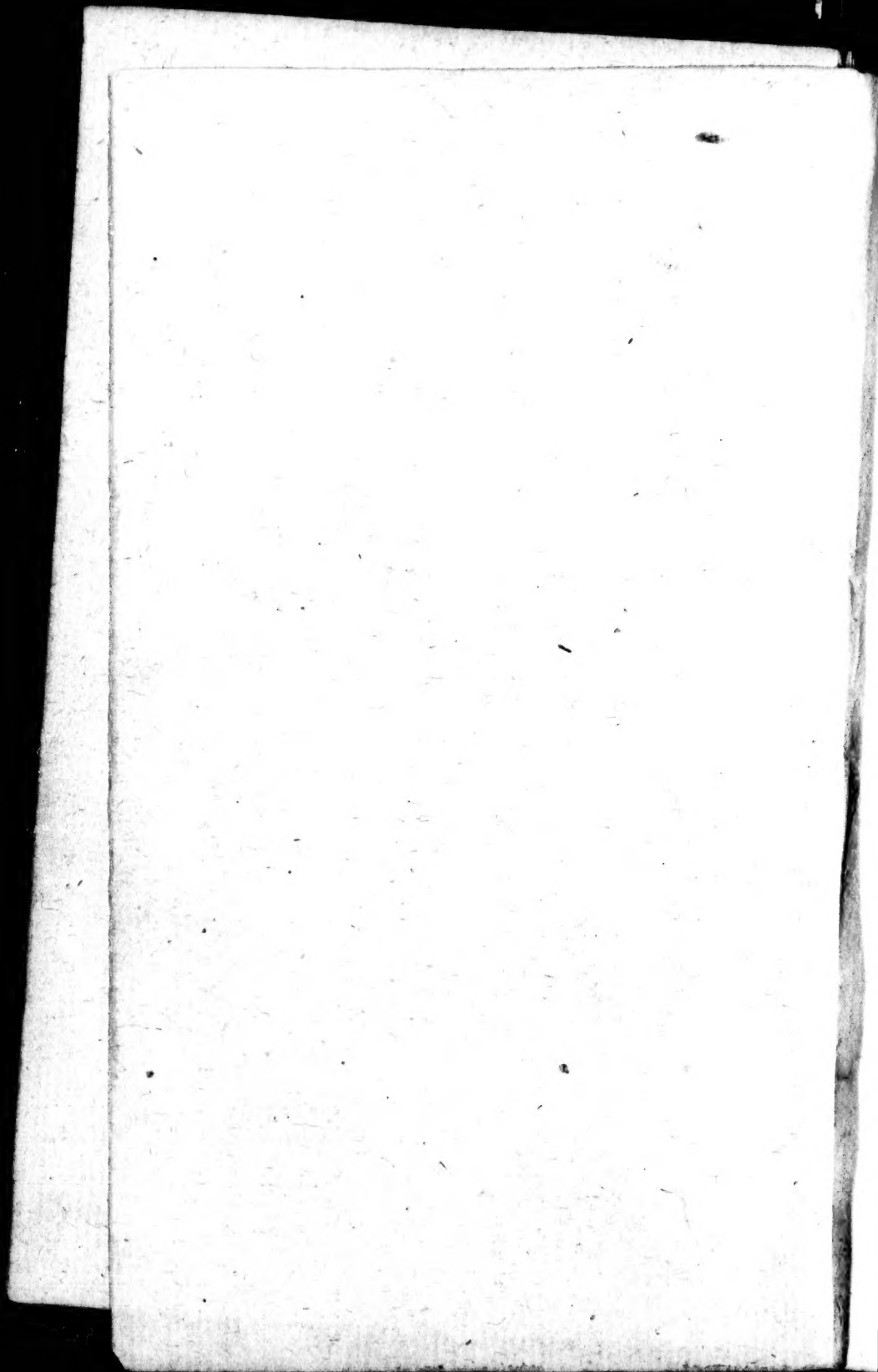




Marchioness

MEMOIRS

OF THE

Marchion. of Pompadour.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

Wherein are Displayed

The Motives of the Wars, Treaties of Peace,
Embassies, and Negotiations, in the several
Courts of Europe:

The Cabals and Intrigues of Courtiers; the Charac-
ters of Generals, and Ministers of State, with the
Causes of their Rise and Fall; and, in general, the
most remarkable Occurrences at the Court of
France, during the last twenty Years of the Reign
of Lewis XV.

Translated from the French.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

D U B L I N:

Printed for W. and W. SMITH, P. WILSON, J.
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THE
EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE following work must be acknowledged highly interesting to these times; and to posterity will be still more so. These are not the memoirs of a mere woman of pleasure, who has spent her life in a voluptuous court, but the history of a reign remarkable for revolutions, wars, intrigues, alliances, negotiations; the very blunders of which are not beneath the regard of politicians, as having greatly contributed to give a new turn to the affairs of Europe.

The Lady who drew the picture was known to be an admirable colourist.

They who were personally acquainted with Mademoiselle Poisson, before and since her marriage with M. le Normand, know her to have been possessed of a great deal of that wit, which, with proper culture, improves into genius.

VOL. I.

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The King called her to court at a tempestuous season of life, when the passions reign uncontrouled, and by corrupting the heart, enlarge the understanding.

They who are near the persons of Kings, for the most part, surpass the common run of mankind, both in natural and acquired talents; for ambition is ever attended with a sort of capacity to compass its ends; and all courtiers are ambitious.

No sooner does the Sovereign take a mistress, than the courtiers flock about her. Their first concern is to give her her cue; for as they intend to avail themselves of her interest with the King, she must be made acquainted with a multitude of things: she may be said to receive her intelligence from the first hand, and to draw her knowledge at the fountain head.

Lewis XV. intrusted the Marchioness de Pompadour with the greatest concerns of the nation; so that if she had been without those abilities which distinguished her at Paris, she must still have improved in the school of Versailles.

Her talents did not clear her in the public eye; never was a favourite more outrageously pelted with pamphlets, or exposed to more clamorous invectives. Of this her Memoirs are a full demonstration; her enemies charged her with many very odious vices, without so much as allowing her

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her one good quality. The grand subject of murmur was the bad state of the finances, which they attributed to her amours with the King.

They who brand the Marchionefs with having run Lewis XV. into vast expences, seem to have forgot those which his predecessor's mistresses had brought on the state.

Madame de la Valiere, even before she was declared mistress to Lewis XIV. induced him to give entertainments, which cost the nation more than ever Madame de Pompadour's fortune amounted to.

Madam de Montespan put the same Prince to very enormous expences; she appeared always with the pomp and parade of a Queen, even to the having guards to attend her.

Scarron's widow carried her pride and ostentation still furthur: she drew the King in to marry her, and this mistress came to be queen, an elevation which will be an eternal blot on the Prince's memory.

This clandestine commerce gave rise to an infamous practice at court, with which Madame de Pompadour cannot be charged. All these concubines having children, to gratify their vanity, they must be legitimated; and, afterwards, they found means to marry these sons, or daughters, of prostitution, to the branches of the royal blood; a flagrant debasement of the house which were

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in kin to the crown : for though a Sovereign can legitimate a bastard, to efface the stain of bastardy is beyond his power. The consequence was, that the descendants of that clandestine issue aspired to the throne ; and, through the King's scandalous amours, that lustre which is due only to virtue, fell to the portion of vice.

It was given out in France, and over all Europe, that Madame de Pompadour was immensely rich : but nothing of this appeared at her death, except her magnificent moveables, and these were rather the consequences of her rank at court, than the effects of her vanity. This splendor his Majesty partook of, as visiting her every day.

The public is generally an unfair judge of those who hold a considerable station at court, deciding from vague reports, which are often the forgeries of ill-grounded prejudice. Madame de Pompadour has been charged with insatiable avarice. Had this been the case, she might have indulged herself at will : she was at the spring-head of opulence ; the King never refused her any thing ; so that she might have amassed any money ; which she did not. There are now existing, in France, fifty wretches of financiers, each of a fortune far exceeding her's.

It was also said, that the best thing which could happen to France, was to be rid of this rapacious favourite. Well ; she is no more ; and what is France the better for it ? Has her death

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EDITOR'S PREFACE. v

death been followed by one of those sudden revolutions in the government, which usher in a better form of administration? Have they who looked on this Lady as an unsurmountable obstacle to France's greatness, proposed any better means for raising it from its present low state? Is there more order in the government? are the finances improved? is there more method and œconomy? No, affairs are still in the same bad way; the lethargy continues as profound as ever. The ministry, which before Madame de Pompadour's death was fast asleep, is not yet awake. Every thing remains in *statu quo*. Some European governments have no regular motion; they advance either too fast, or too slow; their steps are either precipitate, or sluggish.

In this favourite's time, there was too much shifting and changing in the ministry; now she is gone, there is none at all, &c. &c.

I am very far from intending a panegyric on Madame de Pompadour. Faults she had, which posterity will never forgive. All the calamities of France were imputed to her, and she should have resigned in compliance to the public: a nation is to be respected even in its prejudices. With any tolerable share of patriotism, Madame de Pompadour would have quitted the court, and thus approved herself deserving of the favour for which she was execrated; but her soul was not capable of such an act of magnanimity: she knew nothing of that philosophy which, inspiring a

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contempt of external grandeur, endears the subject to the Prince, and exalts him above the throne.

There is great appearance that this Lady intended to revise both her Memoirs and her will, and that death prevented her: she used to write, by starts, detached essays, without any coherence; and these on separate bits of paper. These were very numerous and diffuse, as generally are the materials intended to form a book, if she really had any such design.

We were obliged to throw by on all sides, and clear our way through an ocean of writings, a long and tiresome business.

It is far from being improbable, that Madame de Pompadour got some statesman, well versed in such matters, to assist her in compiling this book: however that be, we give it as it stands in her original manuscript.

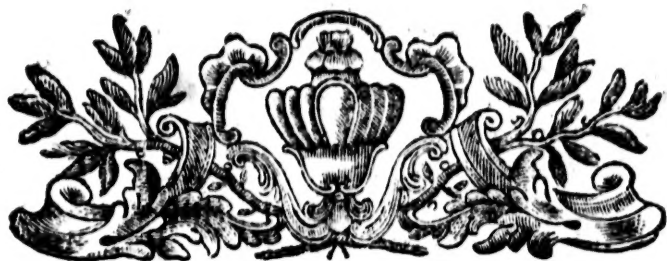
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MEMOIRS

OF THE

Marchioness of Pompadour.

THE following narrative is not confined to the particular history of my life. My design is more extensive : I shall endeavour to give a true representation of the court of France under the reign of Lewis XV. The private memoirs of a King's mistress are in themselves of small import ; but to know the character of the Prince who raises her to favour ; to be let into the intrigues of his reign, the genius of the courtiers, the practices of the ministers, the views of the great, the projects of the ambitious ; in a word, into the secret springs of politics, is not a matter of indifference.

It is very seldom that the public judge rightly of what passes in the cabinet : they hear that the King orders armies to take the field ; that he wins or loses battles ; and on these occurrences they argue according to their particular prejudices.

History does not come nearer the mark ; the generality of annalists being only the echoes of the public mistakes.

These papers I do not intend to publish in my life-time ; but should they appear after my death, posterity will see in them a faithful draught of the several parts of the administration, which were acted, in some measure, under my eye. Had I never lived at Versailles, the events of our times might have been an inexplicable riddle to posterity ; so complicated are the incidents, and in many particulars so contradictory, that, without a key, there is no decyphering them.

Ministers and other place-men are not always acquainted with the means, which they themselves make use of for attaining certain ends. A plenipotentiary very well knows that he signs a treaty of peace, but he is ignorant of the King's motives for putting an end to the war.

Every politician strikes out a system in his own sagacious brain ; the speculatists have often fathered on France what she never dreamed of ; and many refined schemes have been attributed to her ministers, which never made part of their plan.

It is not long since a minister of a certain court said to me at Versailles, That the two last German wars, which cost France so much blood, and three hundred millions of livres, was the greatest stroke of policy which the age afforded : as this court had thereby insensibly, and unknown to the rest of Europe, reduced the power of the Queen of Hungary : for, added he, if, on the demise of Charles VI. this crown had openly bent all its forces against the house of Austria, a general alliance would have opposed it : whereas it has weakened that house by a series of little battles and repeated losses, &c. &c.

The inserting such an anecdote in the annals of our age would be sufficient to disfigure the whole history. The truth is, that they who
were

were at the head of the French affairs, during these two wars, had no manner of genius.

All details not relative to the state I shall carefully omit, as rather writing the age of Lewis XV. than the history of my private life. The transactions of a King's favourite concern only the reign of that Prince; but truth is of perpetual concern.

I hope the public does not expect from me a circumstantial journal of Lewis XV's gallantries: the King had many transitory amours during my residence at Versailles; but none of his mistresses were admitted into the public affairs. The reign of the far greater part began and ended in the Prince's bed. These foibles, so closely connected with human nature, belong rather to a King's private life, than to the public history of a Monarch: I may sometimes mention them, but it will only be by the way. I shall likewise be silent in regard to my family. The particular favour, with which I have been honoured by Lewis XV. has placed my origin in broad daylight. A Monarch in raising a woman to the summit of grandeur, of course lays open the blemishes of her birth. The annals of the universe have been overlooked, to make a singular case of what has been almost a general practice in the world.

The Roman Emperors often raised to favour and eminence women of more obscure birth than mine: but, without going so far backward, the history of our own Kings abounds with such instances. Though the widow of Scarron the poet rose a step higher than I, she was not born to such exaltation. It is true her father was a gentleman; but all women, not born Princesses, are at a like distance from the throne.

A multitude of injurious reports have been propagated concerning my parents. A wretched anonymous writer has gone even farther, by publishing a scandalous book with the title of the history of my life. The Count D'Affry wrote to me from Holland, that this production was of the growth of Great-Britain. The English seem to make it their particular business to throw dirt at persons of distinguished rank at the court of France : that government is said to claim such a privilege, in order to keep up the hatred between the two nations.

Though my birth had nothing great in it, my education was not neglected. I was taught dancing, music, and the rules of elocution, by excellent masters ; and those little talents have proved of the highest use to me. I also read a great deal, and a favourite writer of mine was one Madame de Villegieu. Her picture of the Roman empire entertained me exceedingly. I even felt a very lively joy in observing that the greatest revolutions in the world have been owing to love.

After bestowing on me all the accomplishments which advantageously distinguish a young person of my sex, I was married to one whom I did not love ; and a misfortune still greater was, that he loved me. This I call a misfortune, and indeed I know not a greater on earth ; for a woman not beloved by a man, whom she likewise has married without any affection, at least comforts herself in his indifference.

During the first years of my marriage, the King's gallantries were much talked of at Paris : his fleeting amours opened a field for all women, who had beauty enough to put in for his heart.

The post of mistress to Lewis XV. was often vacant. At Versailles all the passions had an
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appearance of debauchery. In that airy region love was soon exhausted, as consisting wholly in fruition. Nothing of delicacy was to be seen at court; the whole scene of sensibility was in the Prince's bed. This Monarch often lay down with a heart full of love, and the next morning rose with as much indifference.

This account made me shudder; for I own I had then formed a design of winning the heart of that Prince. I was afraid that he was so used to change, as to be past all constancy.

I even, then, blushed at the thought of giving myself up to an inclination of no farther consequence than a momentary gratification of the senses; but was fixed on my design.

I had often seen the King at Versailles, without being perceived by him; our looks had never met; my eyes had a great deal to say, but had no opportunity of explaining my desires. At length I had an interview with the monarch, and, for the first time, talked with him in private. There is no expressing what passed in me at this first conversation; fear, hope, and admiration, successively agitated my soul. The King soon dispelled my confusion; for Lewis XV. is certainly the most affable Prince in his court, if not in the whole world. In private discourse his rank lays no restraint, and all ideas of the throne are suspended; an air of candour and goodness diffuses itself through every part of his behaviour; in short, he can forget that he is a King, to be the more a gentleman.

Our conversation was to me all charming: I pleased and was pleased. The King has since owned to me, that he loved me from that first interview. It was there agreed that we should see one another privately at Versailles: he was very much for my immediately coming to an apartment in

in the palace : he even insisted on it ; but I begged he would give me leave to remain still incognito for some time ; and the King, being the most polite man in France, yielded to my request. On my return to Paris, a thousand fresh emotions rose in my breast. A strange thing is the human heart ! we feel the effects of those passions of which we know not the cause. I am still at a loss whether I loved the King from this first meeting : that it gave me infinite pleasure, I know ; but pleasure is not always a consequence of love. We are susceptible of a multitude of other passions, which may produce the like effect.

I experienced a thousand delights in our secret intercourse : little do I wonder that Madame de la Valiere, in the infancy of her amours with Lewis XIV. was so transported with the sole enjoyment of that Monarch's affection : but at length, the King requiring that I should live at Versailles, I complied with his desire.

Now was my first appearance at court. Very faint and imperfect are the descriptions which books give of this grand theatre. I thought myself amidst another species of mortals : I observed that their manners and usages are not the same ; and that in regard to dress, deportment, and language, the inhabitants of Versailles are entirely different from those of Paris. Every courtier, besides his personal character, frames to himself another, under which he acts his several parts. In town, virtue and vice are streightened ; here both range at large. The passions are the stronger, as they happen to be at the source of the means of gratifying them. Private interest, from whence they derive all their activity, is there in its centre. The Prince's favour gives life and motion to the courtier's soul : without a beam from the throne, it is all a horrid gloom.

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To appear with dignity on this theatre ; where I was an utter stranger, I saw that it behoved me to make it my first care to examine into the temper of those actors who played the capital parts.

Of his Majesty I knew nothing, but by common report ; and that, when it relates to a reigning Prince, is generally wrong ; either flattery attributing too many virtues to him, or malevolence charging him with too many vices.

Lewis XV. is endowed with great natural parts, a surprising quickness of apprehension, and solidity of judgment. He, at once, discerns the springs which give motion to the most complicated affairs of politics : he knows all the weaknesses of the general system, and the faults of each particular administration. This Prince has a noble and exalted soul : the blood of the legislator, the hero, and the warrior, runs in his veins ; but a narrow education has stifled the effect of these advantages. Cardinal Fleury, having not one great principle in himself, trained this Prince to nothing but trifles : yet this unequal education did not extinguish in him the most amiable qualities which can adorn a Sovereign. It is impossible to exceed the goodness of Lewis XV's heart : he is humane, mild, affable, compassionate, just, delighting in good, a declared enemy to every thing which does not bear the stamp of honour and probity, &c. &c.

Singular likewise are the virtues of the Queen : she has laid all domestic hardships at the foot of the cross ; so far from lamenting a fate, which would have embittered the whole life of another. Princess, she considers it as a particular favour of Heaven, from a persuasion that Providence is pleased to try her firmness in this life, in order to confer the greater reward on her in the next. None of those fretful words which speak a rankled heart ever came

came from her: she dwells with pleasure on the King's eminent qualities, and draws a veil over his weaknesses: she never speaks of him but with a sensible respect and veneration: it is impossible for any lady to carry Christian perfection to a higher degree, and to concenter so many qualities in a rank, where the least defects efface the greatest virtues.

The Dauphin, being at that time very young, did not in the least concern himself in public affairs. The King had ordered him not to interfere in politics, and he seemed sufficiently inclined to conform to such injunctions.

The young Princeesses kept pretty much in their apartments, and read a great deal. Sometimes, indeed, they went a-hunting, dined with the King in public, shewed themselves at the balls; then withdrew, without much minding the intrigues of the court.

The Duke of Orleans, though first Prince of the blood, seldom came to Versailles: he had given into devotion, and spent his life in deeds of charity.

The Prince of Conti was at that time in the field, and wholly taken up with military glory.

Condé was very young, and his uncle Charolois sunk in the most debauched intemperance.

The other Princes of the royal blood had little or no share in public affairs; accordingly they never came to Versailles, but to be present at a great council, or at the King's levee.

Cardinal Tencin bore a great sway at court; the King confided in him very much; so that they often used to be busy together. The most weighty concerns of the crown were put into this ecclesiastic's hands. Many extolled him as a great minister; but as I scarce knew the man, I shall say nothing of him: yet, when I think how much France has

has suffered by Richelieu, Mazarin, and Fleury, I own I do not like to see people of that class at the head of affairs.

The Count de Maurepas excelled all the ministers of that time in genius, activity, and penetration: he was of as long a standing in the ministry as Lewis XV. in the sovereignty. To him the kingdom is indebted for several noble institutions. It was he who re-established the navy, which, after the death of Lewis XIV. had been most shamefully neglected. I have been told that the Levant trade was entirely his work. He was indefatigable in his department; and his dispatches were surprisingly accurate. I have seen many of his letters; and think it is scarce possible to comprize so many things in so few words.

The d'Argensons, who had been introduced lately into the ministry, had as yet no settled character: they were said not to want either genius or probity; but that is not always sufficient for a proper discharge of such a post. I have heard that many qualifications are requisite; and that, if the least of them be wanting, there is no making any figure in the ministry.

The Count de St. Florentin, who managed ecclesiastical matters, was little considered either at court or in town. He kept himself neuter amidst the intrigues of Versailles, minding only the business of his own department. As no great genius is required to issue letters *de cachet*, and banish priests, he filled his post with all the dignity of a minister whose only business is to sign.

Orry, the Comptroller-general, was looked upon as a man of abilities, from his talent at scheming pecuniary edicts. Within some months after I had been settled at Versailles, he laid before the King no less than twenty-five, and these were to bring

bring in two hundred millions. He was called the *Grand Financier*, from his finding resources for the King, by impairing those of the state.

The Prince de Soubise was a man of parts and discernment. He knew a great deal; but his friends could have wished that he had not embarked in war. The soldiery had no opinion of him: Perhaps in this they were wrong; yet a great man, who would be useful to his country, must give way to public prejudice.

Marshal Noailles had still greater abilities; so that it may be questioned whether ever any one statesman or general possessed so extensive a knowledge. The forming of him was an effort of nature. There is not a science relating to political, civil, and military government, with which he was not intimately acquainted; but the exertion of these qualities was limited to the cabinet. His timidity and irresolution, in a day of action, benumbed his faculties, otherwise so excellent: his genius was certainly vast and extensive; and I question whether Europe had his equal in council.

Marshal Belleisle was then in high reputation: the court and town were full of his praise. There was not in all France a man who had been at more pains to acquire a superficial knowledge of useless things: He pretended to be acquainted with every subject, and he had the art of making others believe so; hence it was not in the least suspected that he understood the art of war as little as that of negotiation: his manners were mild and engaging, and he had an agreeable fluency of speech; but he was so conceited of his knowledge, that although he affected a certain degree of modesty, still his deportment was sure to betray his pride: in short, I never knew a vainer creature.

The Chevalier Belleisle did not affect to have so much

much understanding as his brother, which fhewed him to have the more; but he had all the exceffive ambition of the Marshal, and loft his life in attempting to force an intrenchment, the fuccefs of which would have raifed him to the fame rank.

The Duke de Richelieu was ftill more idolized than Marshal Belleifle. The King could not be without him. He was fure to be one at the private fuppers, and he fuperintended all the diverfions of Verfailles. Never was any man like him for ftriking out a party of pleafure, and enlivening it by little incidents. He made it his bufinefs to divert the King, and was very alert in feizing every opportunity conducive to that end: but it was not for the King's fake that he gave himfelf all that trouble: his motive of acting was his own aggrandizement; for he is infatiably greedy of rank and diftinctions. Though of no genius for war, he had the ambition of being created a Marshal of France; and without any political talents, he was for thrufting himfelf into the miniftry.

Maurice of Saxony was the hero of France: he was efteemed the kingdom's guardian angel. I fhall fpeak of him when I come to treat of the battle of Fontenoy.

Monsieur d'Etrées had the reputation of an able general: I fhall make farther mention of him in the fequel.

The greater part of the other courtiers were fubordinate officers: they ufed to come from the army to Verfailles, and then go back from Verfailles to the army; all their bufinefs at court being about preferments. Thefe were the Dukes of Grammont, Piquigny, Biron, la Valiere, Boufflers, Luxembourg; the Marquiffes of Putange, Maubourg, Bregè, Langeron, Armentieres, Creil, Renepont; the Counts Coigny, la Mothe-Houdan-court,

court, Clermont, Estrées, Berenger; Messieurs d'Aumont, Meuse, Ayou, Cibert, Chersey, Buckley, Segur, Fenelon, St. André, Varennes, Montal, Balincourt, la Fare, Clermont-Tonnerre, with many more who were for raising themselves by the sword.

There was, at that time, scarce a woman at court who aspired at the King's affections. Those of a distinguished rank disdained to be the objects of a transient love; and others, who courted that situation, had neither beauty nor graces sufficient to obtain it; so that it was only Parisian Ladies who entered into any of these intrigues, several were sure to place themselves in sight whenever the King dined in public; and always attended him to the chace: in short, they were ever dangling after his Majesty, which was just the very way to come short of their aim.

My thoughts were employed to secure myself in the station to which fortune had raised me. The King was with me as often as the affairs of the crown would allow; leaving all grandeur behind him, and coming into my apartment without any thing of that state which attends on him at other places: for my part, I closely studied his temper.

Lewis XV. is naturally of a saturnine turn: his soul is shrouded in a thick gloom; so that, with every pleasure at command, he may be said to be unhappy. Sometimes his melancholy throws him into such a languor that nothing affects him, and then he is quite insensible to all entertainment and pleasure. In these intervals, life becomes an insupportable burden to him. The enjoyment of a beautiful woman for a while diverts his uneasiness; but so far is it from being a lasting relief, that his melancholy afterwards returns upon him with redoubled weight.

Another

Another misfortune in this Prince's life is, the continual conflict between his devotion and his passions; pleasure drawing him on, and remorse withholding him: Under this incessant struggle, he is one of the most unhappy men in his kingdom.

I perceived that the King's disposition was not to be changed by love only: this put me on engaging him by the charms of conversation; which has a stronger influence with men than the passions themselves. Of this, history furnished me with an instance in the person of his great grandfather. Lewis XIV. had so habituated himself to Madame de Maintenon, that no other woman could make any impression on him; and, tho' the court at that time was full of celebrated beauties, Scarron's widow, at an age when female influence over man is generally on the decline, found means so strongly to fix his affection, that her death only put an end to the charm.

I planned a series of diversions, which, following close on one another, got the better of the King's constitution, and diverted him from himself. I brought him to like music, dancing, plays, and little operas, in which I myself used to perform; and private suppers terminated the festivity. Thus the King lay down and rose in perfect satisfaction and good humour. The next day, unless detained on some great council, or other extraordinary ceremony, he would hasten to my apartment, to take, if I may presume to use the expression, his dose of good humour for the whole day. He grew fond of me from that instinct which makes us love what contributes to our happiness. All the favourites before me had thought only of making themselves loved by the King: it had not come into their heads to divert him.

Thus

Another

Thus I became necessary to his Majesty; his attachment grew stronger every day. I could have wished that our union had rested on love only; but with a Prince accustomed to change, we must do as well as we can.

After the first moments of surprize, which naturally arises in our minds upon any great change, I, in my turn, gave myself up to uneasy reflections. Amidst all the King's affection, I feared the return of his inconstancy. I could lay but little stress on my elevation; all bow the knee to the idol whilst the Prince worships it; but on his over-throwing the altar, it is trampled under foot. Some days after I thought I had more reason than ever to fear; for the King, coming to sup with me, seemed more thoughtful than usual. Instead of that gaiety which began to be natural to him, his countenance was quite clouded: all his talk was about politics, the affairs of Europe, and dispatching a courier to the army; thus, after a short conversation, he withdrew. This abruptness filled me with alarms: I had not a wink of sleep; and next morning I sent him an account of my condition in the following note:

“ SIRE,

“ Your politics have quite broke my heart. I
“ was going to say a thousand pleasant things to
“ you, had not your dispatches interrupted me. I
“ have not closed my eyes during the whole night;
“ for God's sake, Sire, leave Europe to itself, and
“ allow me to lay open to you the state of my
“ heart, which is on the rack when you deprive
“ me of any opportunity of telling you that I love
“ you with an affection, the end of which will
“ be that of my life.”

The

The King having read my letter, came in person to my apartment to make me easy; and he was now more gay than usual. I think I never saw him in a better temper. He had already given me some insight into the great events at that time on the carpet, and I was for diving into the truth of these abstruse mysteries; but not a word did I then understand in politics. I have heard that the English ladies have every morning ready laid on their toilet a paper giving them an account of the affairs of Europe, whereas all that we French women find there is our paint-boxes.

I applied to Marshal Belleisle. "My Lord, be so kind as to instruct me in what you call politics, which every body here is continually talking of." He answered me smiling, "I cannot bring myself, Madam, to instruct you in a science which will prove destructive to many." Yet the veteran courtier talked to me of systems, and enlarged upon the methods to be used by a state for its aggrandisement.

After listening to him for some time, I concluded, though a novice at court, that this science is not reducible to principles nor general rules, as totally depending on time, place, and circumstances, and these almost ever arising from chance.

In order to get a knowledge of the preceding administrations, I set myself to read the history of our government; but it was not in books that I sought for this knowledge, having always looked on them as the source of public errors. I consulted original manuscripts, which were put into my hands by the King himself. Here I saw all the former mistakes and the original causes of them.

As it was known both at Paris and Versailles that Lewis XV. was unsettled in his amours, his favourites had no very regular court. It often fell out

out that a lady whom the King had distinguished, lay down in high favour, and rose in disgrace : for vacant employments and temporary grants the favourites were practised on; but for the great purposes of ambition other springs than mistresses were set to work.

In the first months of my favour scarce any body came near me. The Duke de Richelieu was the only nobleman who visited me in the King's absence; but when, by the Monarch's order, I made my appearance as Marchioness de Pompadour, and his Majesty was continually giving me marks of his esteem, the face of things changed. Envy and ambition formed two numerous parties. The former blackened me with the most virulent malice; and the latter as much exceeded in the most fulsome adulation. The motive in one was hope of preferment, the other acted from a despair of ever being preferred : both, however, joined in asking favours of me.

I used my interest with the King in behalf of both. If I raised a person to a considerable post, or procured him a large pension, I surely drew on myself a hundred enemies, besides his ingratitude. At length all the kingdom came to pay their court to me; for the royal favour continued to shine on me as bright as ever. They who had been the most forward in reviling my birth, now claimed kindred with me. I shall never forget a letter I received at Versailles from a gentleman of one of the most antient families in Provence, in the following terms:

“ Dear Cousin,

“ I did not know that I was related to you till
 “ now that the King has created you Marchioness
 “ de Pompadour: a learned genealogist has de-
 “ monstrated

“monftrated to me, that your great-grandfather
 “was fourth coufin to my grandfather; fo you
 “fee, dear coufin, our alliance is indisputable.
 “If you defire it, I’ll fend you our pedigree, that
 “you may fhew it to the King.

“In the mean time, my fon, your coufin,
 “who has ferved with diftinction feveral years,
 “wants a regiment; and as he cannot hope to
 “obtain it by his rank, be fo good as to ask the
 “favour from the King.”

I fend him the following answer :

SIR,

“I fhall lay hold of the very firft opportunity
 “to defire his Majefty to give your fon a regi-
 “ment. But I likewise have a favour to ask of
 “you, which is to difpenfe me from the honour
 “of being related to you. I have fome family
 “reafoins which forbid me to think, that my fore-
 “fathers have ever been allied to any of the an-
 “tient houfes of this kingdom.”

Half France would hide themfelves for fhame,
 were I to give a detail of all the mean, fawning
 letters fend to me by perfons of the firft families
 in the kingdom. A Princefs could write to me in
 this manner :

“My dear Friend,

“I beg you would ask the King for a grant of
 “farmer-general for Mr. Armand M—, a fu-
 “perannuated clerk, whose fortune I would gladly
 “make. For this favour I fhall hold myfelf ob-
 “liged to you as long as I live.

“I am, my dear,

“With all poffible regard,

“Your moft humble fervant.”

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The public envy, however, increasing with the marks of royal favour, the world, at any rate, would make me answerable for the events of the times. It has been in every body's mouth, that all the misfortunes of France were owing to me. If there were any grounds for such a charge, the kingdom must have been in a prosperous and flourishing state when his Majesty called me to Versailles; whereas it was very far from being so. The cause of the evil lay deep; so that France, under all its pressures, was only fulfilling its destiny. The misfortunes of the administration in this reign are to be considered as flowing from the former administration.

At the time of the demise of Lewis XIV. the kingdom was in a dreadful disorder; the debts of the nation were immense, and the public credit totally ruined; so that the state then laboured under an evil, which was not to be cured by temporary remedies. Lewis the Great, by his excessive fondness for splendor, had impoverished the people. The preceding Kings were contented with being the stewards or managers of the general wealth, but he made himself the proprietor of it; he became master of the nation's treasure; all the finances were in his hands: he had augmented the crown revenues beyond all relative proportion; in the course of three years the whole species of France came into his coffers; besides, his magnificence had set his subjects the pernicious example of impoverishing themselves by profuse expences.

The duke of Orleans, who was at the head of the state after Lewis XIV. so far from restoring order, increased the confusion. He promoted a system of finances, which proved their utter ruin. All the riches of the monarchy changed hands. No such thing as money was to be seen; foreigners ran away with one part, and domestic stock-jobbers

jobbers secreted the other ; no plan of administration could be contrived, capable of putting a stop to evils, unprecedented from the very foundation of the monarchy. This revolution greatly affected the several branches of the national strength. Agriculture, trade, arts, and ingenuity, were sufferers by it, and still suffer : for I have heard very knowing persons say, that the grand system had given birth to many detrimental systems in the state.

Cardinal Fleury succeeded him ; and things went still worse : he alone did more harm to France than all those before him, who had like to have ruined this realm. His particular qualities were order, œconomy, and moderation ; virtues excellent in a private person, but in a statesman often very great vices. All his view was, to fill the treasury, fancying that if the King were but rich, the state would no longer be poor. Thus he went on increasing the opulence of the crown, from the people's subsistence. Intent upon saving, he let the navy run to ruin, that is, he deprived France of the only way left for retrieving itself.

Fleury died ; but this produced no amendment in the administration. France had not a minister capable of setting things to rights. They who were put at the head of affairs, were very busy, but without any knowledge. I have been told by a very experienced person, who used to come and see me at Versailles, that if at the Cardinal's death the ministry had been put into the hands of an angel, he could not have done the crown much good. He added, that all the most able minister could do, was to prepare materials for a better administration. The government, said he, has six capital imperfections, and these are not to be amended. But by casting the constitution in a new mould.

Another outcry was my being the source of favours, and that I disposed of every thing in the kingdom; with this addition, that I had brought the King to such a custom of visiting me, as had made it a kind of law to him, never to refuse me any thing. To this I answer, that it is an evil both necessary and natural to absolute government. Sovereigns must either have a confidant or a mistress; and of the two the state generally suffers most by the former. Men in general have ambitious views, which a woman does not trouble herself about. The confidant studies to avail himself of the prince's favour in all the means of raising himself to the highest fortune; he gets the sole management of the public finances; he engrosses the most lucrative posts, and distributes among his relations and creatures, those which he does not take for himself: the consequence of this is a general revolution in the government. In short, he has schemes of grandeur and elevation quite foreign to our sex.

I have read in the annals of our monarchy that Richelieu's ambition brought a thousand mischiefs on France: that favourite of Lewis XIII. sacrificed every thing to a giddy desire of appearing to be the only person of consequence in the kingdom. He cut the very sinews of the political power of all other bodies. He annulled the privileges of the nobility, which alone could make any stand against the despotism of our Kings; and therein he did more harm to France, than ever it has to fear from any mistresses.

Mazarine, the second favourite, had an army in pay, and personally made war on the state. He imprisoned the princes of the blood, and raised such animosities and disturbances as in a manner subverted all government. He got the public treasure into his possession; almost all the money
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Marchioness of POMPADOUR. 27

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of the kingdom was in his coffers. He used to
sell the principal state employments: when the
King wanted money he was obliged to apply to
him. And our times have seen Count Bruhl, the
King of Poland's favourite exceed his master, in
extravagance.

There are, at this time, several Dukes in the
kingdom * who give France cause to remember
that its Kings have had favourites; whereas what
great fortune, what titles or distinctions has my
brother Marigni? Die when he will, he will
leave no monuments of the particular favour with
which Lewis the XVth honoured me.

I have been likewise accused of introducing into
the ministry persons of no turn for business, igno-
rant, shallow, and superficial fellows: but where
shall I find any other in France? The human mind
seems to have been degenerated among us.

The French nobility, though most concerned
in the public administration, give no attention to
business; their life is a round of indolence, luxury,
and dissipation. They know as little of politics as
of finances and œconomy. A gentleman either
spends his life at his seat in rural sports, or comes
to Paris to ruin himself with an opera girl. They
who have an ambition to figure in the ministry,
have no other merit than intrigue and cabal. If
they are traversed in their views, or afterwards
superfeded, such measure is with them an effect of
the prince's prejudice.

The age of able ministers in France seems past.
After all my inquiries for a Colbert and Louvois,
I could only meet with Chamillards and Dubois's;
so that I was forced to commit all the branches of
government to financiers by profession; a set of

* The duke of Richelieu, Mazarin, and Fleury.

people void of capacity, and only skilful in one thing, which is pillaging the state.

My enemies have farther affirmed, that I put the King on too frequent a change of his ministers; but that is an invention, which, in no wise, belongs to me. Before ever I knew the court, placemen were not more settled in their posts than since. Every day saw such creations and institutions; and this, perhaps, may still be a necessary evil in France. Before those gentlemen are in place, nothing can come up to their plan of government; they have effectual ways and means for reforming every thing that is amiss; they know the seat of the disease, and what will remove it: but no sooner have they got the reins of government in their hands, than their incapacity throws every thing into confusion. On the public misfortunes they scarce bestow a thought; all they mind is their own personal interest. The ambition of being prime minister soon gets footing in them; and its continual agitation leaves no room in their mind for any attention to the kingdom. Ten years of administration in France make a minister so absolute, that he grows a mere Pacha; any intimation of his is a peremptory order: the Grand Signior is not more despotic at Constantinople than a French Secretary of State, after spending ten years at Versailles.

It is the same with military affairs, however brave and courageous the French nobility may be, they have little or no genius for war: the hardship of a campaign immediately puts them out of conceit. France has no military school*. A young nobleman is made a Colonel before he is an officer, and then steps into the general command, without any experience. If two Frenchmen are appointed

* The military school was but just instituted.

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to command the armies in Flanders or Germany, immediately the spirit of envy kindles among them, and they will gratify their private piques and quarrels, whatever becomes of the state. In the mean time, the enemy profit by these divisions, and forward their schemes. In the late war, the King was obliged to commit the safety of his crown to two foreigners: had it not been for the Counts Saxe and Lowendahl, the enemies of France might have been at the gates of Paris.

It is a mistake to think that a woman, who is in distinguished favour with a Prince, stands in need of weak ministers and bad generals to support her: incapacity spoils all and answers no purpose. Political mistakes, at the same time that they throw a shade on the Prince's glory, utterly efface the lustre of his favourite. I can truly say, that most of the vexations I have gone through, since my residence at court, proceeded from hence. On every advantage gained by our enemies the king used to be melancholy and full of thought; and though this Prince be extremely polite, and not one disobliging word came from his mouth, yet his discomposure, at that time, embittered every other enjoyment of my life.

I never made a minister, I never advised the King to confer the command of an army on any person, of whose abilities I was not certainly convinced, and whose merit was not universally confessed. The great used to compliment me on it, and the King himself congratulated me on my good judgment of men; their fitness was proclaimed by the universal voice.

I must here mention the troubles the court laboured under, when the King gave me an apartment at Versailles; the occurrences of those times belonging to the plan of these Memoirs. Without

that crowd of incidents which then fell out, and which the King used to communicate to me, my favour perhaps had never risen to such a height : for the events of this world are always directed by second causes.

Ever since the year 1741, France had continued to wage war in Italy, in Flanders, and in Germany. Charles the VIth. the last male descendant of the house of Austria by the male side, had an ambition, which was not to be limited even by death ; he was for surviving himself, and transmitting his power beyond the grave.

This Prince, after acquiring a very large extent of dominions, had procured them to be guarantied by the chief powers of christendom. The small military force at that time on foot in Europe, had induced the Christian Princes, to such a weak compliance. Italy was quite spent ; all the petty governments of the empire were under a political slavery ; and the great houses of the North were little better. On the decease of that Prince all began to breathe, and every one claimed their respective right.

The Elector of Bavaria demanded a part of the succession ; Augustus King of Poland set forth his pretensions ; the King of Spain likewise put in for a share : and, what is more, there appeared two pragmatic sanctions ; one giving the Austrian dominions to the Archduchess, spouse to the Polish Prince ; and the other securing them to Maria Theresa, Charles's eldest daughter. Such a contrariety of interests must of course give rise to a general war ; but it began from a quarter which policy would never have apprehended.

The King of Prussia, almost the only Prince in Europe who had no pretensions to the Austrian succession, yet made his demands, and, instead of manifestoes, asserted them by the sword. His troops

troops invaded the very best province of all the Queen of Hungary's dominions, and made themselves masters of it. The crown was of no long standing in the Brandenburg family : it had first obtained the title of Majesty from the Emperor Leopold ; and this honour had little added to its real greatness. The King of Prussia was of little account among the European potentates ; and what claims he had to any of the Austrian effects were merely on a private account ; and turn on the restitution of some duchies, which his family had been possessed of by right of purchase ; yet he invades Silesia as a sovereign.

I have heard that Maria Theresa was on the brink of ruin, when her very enemies saved her. The Hungarians, who for ages past had been endeavouring to overthrow that family, now, one and all, vigorously rose in her defence.

The Duke of Belleisle told me, that this change in the political world was wrought by that Princess's haranguing them in Latin ; " a great change, indeed (added he), for had the Hungarians abandoned that princess, very probably we should have heard no more of the house of Austria."

Lewis XV. joined with the King of Prussia to place the Elector of Bavaria on the Imperial throne ; besides the diversion occasioned in the North by the election, the King said, that the house of Bourbon was now discharging an old debt with Bavaria.

Were gratitude of any weight in the conduct of Sovereigns, France might indeed be thought to have taken arms in return for its obligations to the Electors of Bavaria, who have ever been firm allies to this crown, and had sustained very considerable losses in its cause.

The house of Bourbon joined with that of Brandenburg to weaken the succession of Charles VI; besides, the exaltation of a Prince of the house of Bavaria to the Imperial throne secured to France an ascendancy in Germany.

It has been reported that the King of Prussia, at first, offered Maria Theresa money and troops to maintain her right against the other powers, on condition of her ceding Lower Silesia to him. Had she agreed to this, the affairs of Europe would have taken a different turn. But, from what I have perceived since my living at Versailles, Princes often make a tender of what they have no mind to give. This the Marshal de Noailles called *political compliments*.

Frederick had a sure game of it; and it is seldom that Princes ask of others what they can get by themselves. The house of Austria was not able to make head against his invasion of Silesia; nothing was in readiness for preventing it; therefore France in a manner could do no otherwise than declare for the Prussian Monarch. Accordingly the treaty was made; and to give it the greater weight the King of Poland was made a party; he then little thought that this same Frederic would one day invade his dominions.

This confederacy was the basis of several others: the Palatinate, Spain, and Italy came into the plan; Spain wanted to procure Parma, Placentia, and the Milaneze, for Don Philip.

All the negotiations in Germany were committed to the Marshal Belleisle. The poor Elector of Bavaria, who was to be made Emperor, had not wherewith to raise six regiments; so that, in the war which we were now undertaking for his sake, every thing was to be furnished him. France as it were armed him from head to foot; and made him her Lieutenant General in Germany: and thus

thus the successor of the Cæsars became a subaltern officer of the house of Bourbon: however, in consequence of his title, an army was sent for him to command.

Whilst one party was forming to overthrow the house of Austria, another was gathering to prevent its fall. Holland and England, whose common interest it was that there should be a power in Germany able to cope with Versailles, were already making preparations for a German war; but hitherto the house of Austria received only pecuniary aids.

Prague was taken, and the Elector of Bavaria proclaimed King of Bohemia, and soon after Emperor. This last title he first received from Marshal Belleisle: thus a subject of the King of France disposes of a throne, which anciently, had disposed of all the empires of the world.

This Marshal has since said to me, that the court of Versailles overshot itself, and that the war had been begun where it should have ended. The armies of the King of France and the Elector of Bavaria, together with the Saxon troops, were not sufficient for keeping the countries which it was necessary to reduce.

The victors advanced without ever looking behind them, till Marshal Belleisle, foreseeing that these victories would soon occasion defeats, thought it proper to be indisposed, and ask leave to retire: Marshal Broglio was dispatched to him, and on taking a view of things, soon saw into the cause of Belleisle's indisposition. Six years after, these two Generals being in my apartment, the latter said to the other concerning this affair, *faith, Marshal, you played me a scurvy trick there.*

The Hungarian, made good all losses of men : and I have been since told by connoisseurs in military affairs, that of infantry we sent a sufficiency, but had forgot cavalry, which, in Germany, is the more necessary body.

The King of Prussia's drift was to profit by the disadvantages of his allies : he had made conquests, which he carefully kept to himself, regardless of the losses of his allies ; but he still wanted a decisive victory to make himself dreaded by the house of Austria, with whom he was already disposed to come to terms. He fought the battle of Czaślaw, which terminating in a complete victory on his side, he remained inactive, and soon after struck up a peace with Maria Theresa.

Every thing now went against France ; her troops were driven from their posts, her convoys intercepted, her magazines seized, and the far greater part of the army perished by sickness.

Then it was that the French Generals discovered the Prussian Monarch's temper. Marshal Belleisle has often told me, that he had seen into his way of thinking ; but judged that the progress of the French arms in Germany would force him to be faithful to the alliance. So true is this, added he, that on the first rumour of our misfortunes, I said to M. de Broglie, *the King of Prussia now will shift sides.*

One of the articles of the treaty was, to renounce his alliance with the house of Bourbon ; and thus the French troops were sacrificed.

For that, said a very knowing man to me, not long since, we may thank the council of Versailles, which, instead of such a body of troops as would have been equal to any undertaking, had only sent small armies, whose sickness ruined them as fast as they came.

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The Emperor, being but ill assisted by France, was flying before his enemies; he had quitted his capital, and was at a loss where to shelter himself. His destiny seemed the more melancholy, as he was on the point of being tumbled down from the highest pitch of human exaltation.

Of all his mortifications the most severe certainly was his being forced to become a suppliant to his capital enemy, the Queen of Hungary. He made her an offer to limit his ambition to the imperial crown, and desist from all his claims to the Austrian succession.

But things now went so well with Maria Theresa, that, instead of a moderate answer to these proposals, she very nearly called him rebel, and driving him out of Bavaria, signified to him that the only safe shelter for him in Germany was the territory of the empire.

England's hands were tyed; Maillebois, at the head of a large body of troops, had obliged George II. to sign a treaty of neutrality, and the Dutch were unable and as little disposed to interfere in the affairs of Germany.

Robert Walpole, then the ruling minister in Great Britain, was all for peace, as understanding nothing of war. Every minister in Europe, (as a man of great wit, who often came to me at Versailles, pointed out to me) has his peculiar talents, according to which he gives the bias to public affairs. Walpole's system was that the power of Great Britain lay in trade, and that such a nation is to keep clear of sieges and battles.

The king shewed me several of that minister's letters to Cardinal Fleury. In one he says,

"I engage to keep the parliament to a peaceable disposition, if you will bridle the martial ardour of your people; for a minister in England cannot do every thing," &c. &c.

In another,

*" I have a deal of difficulty to keep our people
" from coming to blows; not that they are bent on
" war, but because I am for preserving peace; for
" our English politicians must be ever skirmishing,
" either in the field or at Westminster.*

In a third letter he expresses himself thus :

*" I pension half the parliament to keep it quiet;
" but as the King's money is not sufficient, and they
" to whom I give none, clamour loudly for a war, it
" is expedient for your Eminence to remit
" five millions of French livres, in order to
" appease these barkers. Gold is a metal which here
" is ill qualities in the blood. A pension of
" two thousand pounds a year will make the most
" impetuous warrior in parliament as tame as a
" lamb. In short, should England break out, you
" will, besides the uncertainty of events in war, be
" under the necessity of paying larger subsidies to
" foreign powers, to be on an equality with us;
" whereas, by furnishing me with a little money,
" you purchase peace at the first hand." &c. &c.*

But Walpole having been obliged to quit the ministry, Great Britain sided with the house of Austria. She was already at war with Spain. The English sent a large army into Flanders, before ever the court of Versailles had thought of garrisoning its strong places, so that the way lay open for them into France; and why they did not enter it, will ever remain a secret. A British minister has since told me, that there were at that time too many malecontents in the army; and that the invasion of France was omitted, purely in spite to a party, who had ever maintained, that the only way to restore the balance of Germany, was to penetrate beyond Flanders. Thus, added the minister by way of reflection, our government which

is looked on as one of the best modeled in Europe, is sacrificed to private passions.

Prague, that city on which France had founded all its hopes, began to be despaired of; and from thence it was that, some time after, Belleisle made that fine retreat, with which, every day of his life afterwards I was sure to be entertained; for the old man was very vain. He used to say, it was the finest military performance the age had seen.

All Europe was in a ferment. Italy had taken arms to defend a liberty which it no longer withstood. I have been told that the Pope himself procured treaties tending to continue and spread the war.

The balance of Europe seems to have been the point in question; but all states aimed at giving France some underhand wounds.

Cardinal Fleury, though he had avoided war, had not studied peace so much as he ought. He had, for some years past, perfectly doated through length of age, and his sticklers took his reveries for so many refined strokes of policy.

Some people in France have greatly cried up his order and œconomy, whereas they were nothing more than the effects of his niggardliness; for so penurious was he, that he never could prevail on himself to furnish his house. All the affairs of France favoured of avarice and parsimony.

On his death, the King became his own master; for till then Lewis had been in reality only the second person in the state: but he made not the least alteration in the tenour of affairs. The same faults went on; so that a judicious person who, at that time, had a place at court, told me lately, that things looked as if the Cardinal had been living after his death, small armies being sent into Germany, by way of œconomy; which all perished like the former.

mer. The Dutch, after many prayers and threats, had declared themselves.

I have been told by a person who has made it his business to observe the policy of every nation, that the Dutch have two maxims from which they never depart, the first is, whatever wars arise between the great powers, to be always neuter, that they may engross the whole commerce of Europe. The second is, to watch the moment of France's being over-powered by its enemies, and then declare war against it. It was unquestionably in consequence of the latter, that they joined their troops to those of England, and took the field. This last alliance was offensive and defensive, and all Europe found itself in a state of war.

Germany, Holland, Flanders, Piedmont, and every part of Italy, swarmed with soldiers. The Count d'Argenson calculated that Europe had then nine hundred thousand men on foot, ready to cut each others throats, without any known reason. Particularly France was ruining its finances, and losing the flower of its people, to no manner of purpose; for, after all, said an able politician to me one day, on this head, what was an Elector of Bavaria's being Emperor of Germany to us; or Don Philip being Duke of Parma? I shall never forget what I read in Voltaire concerning this: *It was, says he, a game that Princes were playing all over Europe, bazzarding, pretty equally, their people's blood and treasure; and by a medley of fine actions, faults, and losses, keeping fortune a long time suspended.* It must be observed that, amidst all this fighting, no war had been declared; the greater part of the troops slaughtered each other only as auxiliaries.

Charles VII. the cause of this general conflagration, had now neither subjects nor dominions left; he

he was not allowed so much as to bear the title of Emperor, the only honour remaining to him; and his election was declared all over Germany to be null and void; so that he saw himself reduced to accept of a neutrality in his own cause. This step alone ought to have put an end to the German war; but, by my own experience, I have since known, that princes do not make war from any connected system, but only as coinciding with the motions of second causes.

The large French armies were now withdrawn out of Germany; indeed most of the troops left there had been made prisoners of war. The Marshal de Noailles has several times said to me, that of all the political errors committed in Europe for these thousand years past, the German war was the greatest.

In reading the history of that time, it appeared to me, that of all the princes engaged in the war, Emanuel King of Sardinia was the only one who had any shadow of reason for it. France was for settling contiguous to his dominions, a prince of the house of Bourbon, whose settlement must have been highly inconvenient to him; accordingly, in order to exclude this dangerous neighbour, he struck in with the enemies of France. From the beginning of the war, this prince had assisted the house of Austria, and now entered into a treaty with it. England supplied him with money to defray the charges of the war: but the Queen of Hungary went farther, conferring on him a little state, which did not belong to her*.

France, in 1744, declared war against England, and the house of Austria; and soon after this de-

* The country of Final, which belonged to the Genoese.

claration, a great project was taken in hand: overtures were made to Prince Edward, the Pretender's son, for recovering the throne of his ancestors.

He was a spirited, bold, courageous young man, quite tired of leading an indolent life at Rome, and impatient to signalize himself.

The house of Stuart is so unfortunate, that I question, whether it would be in the power of all Europe joined, to restore it to its antient rights. There seems something of a fatality annexed to that name.

France made all the preparatives in his favour, and gave him all the assistance which the posture of affairs could admit of; but the whole design miscarried. A long time after, I, one day, asked the King, whether it had been his real intention, to place the Pretender on the throne of Great Britain? his answer was, that neither he nor his council ever thought it practicable; that this restoration depended on a multitude of second causes, the course of which was no longer under any political direction. The Marshal de Noailles one day said to him in my hearing, *Sir, if your Majesty would have had mass said in London, you should have sent an army of three hundred thousand men to officiate at it.*

In the mean time, young Edward, eager of doing something to be talked of, put to sea, and had a distant view of the kingdom, the possession of which both fate and policy denied to him. A tempest disappointed his landing, and scattered his fleet; yet the ardent Pretender would, in spight of the wind, make his landing good, and fight alone against all England. Versailles had received the most particular assurances, that he had a very strong party at London, and it was on this plan that the expedition had been formed.

It is not very long since I happened to be at the Marshal Belleisle's; as he was looking for some writings in his closet, he put a paper into my hand, saying, *There, Madam, there is something for you to read; that letter has cost us a great many millions, which are gone to the bottom of the sea; it was directed to the court of France, by a party of Jacobites, as they are called in England. The words of it were these.*

"The tabernacle is ready, the holy sacrament need but appear, and we will go and meet it with the cross. The procession will be numerous, but the people here being very hard of belief, soldiers and arms will be necessary; for it is only by powder and ball, that the system of transubstantiation can be made to go down in England. Depend on it, that we will do every thing to the utmost of our power; and we can before hand assure you, that the landing once made, our party will have nothing to do but to pronounce these words: ite, Missa est."

In this letter were mentioned twenty-two persons, several of whom now hold a considerable rank in England. Sometime after, he showed me another, the tenor of which is this.

"Whatever people say, the expedition is not difficult: a landing may easily be made, every thing favours the revolution; the advantages religion gives us, will be greatly strengthened by political motives. The Hanoverian is bated, he is continually oppressing the nation, aiming both at absolute power, and draining the people's substance."

The attempt on England failing, fresh efforts were made in Italy for settling Don Philip; but this the King of Sardinia, who has the key of the Alps, opposed; and the Prince of Conti engaged to make his way through them. This was in some measure

measure warring against God, who has separated the two states by inaccessible mountains. I have had several times read to me in my apartment, the transactions of that Prince in those impracticable climates; the taking Chateau Dauphin, and his other successes amidst those rocks and precipices: and the Prince of Conti in this expedition appears to me greater than many heroes whose fame is high; but great men have not always justice done them.

Lewis XV. who never had seen an army, was now for putting himself at the head of his troops, and determined to make his first campaign in Flanders. On his arrival, Courtray surrendered; and soon after Menin followed its example. The King himself, to the great encouragement of the soldiery, used to be present at the works.

This first campaign of the King's having been much talked of in France; on the peace, I asked his Majesty, whether he had found in himself a fixed inclination for war. He at first eluded answering me, and talked in general terms; but a year after, in one of those moments of confidence, when the heart lays itself open in the arms of friendship, he told me it would have been his reigning passion; and that, without the recent example of his great-grand-father, and Cardinal Fleury's earnest councils to him, he should totally have given himself up to war: but that the affection due to his people had got the better of his passion. Happy government, when the Monarch sacrifices his propensions to the welfare of his subjects!

Lewis was obliged to quit his first conquests, and fly to the assistance of Alsace, Prince Charles having passed the Rhine to invade several of the French provinces; but upon the King's approach at the head of his army, the prince repassed the Rhine.

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Marchioness of POMPADOUR. 43

All the advantages which France had gained in Flanders did not much improve its situation. The Queen of Hungary's alliance with England, Holland, Sardinia, and Saxony was too great a counterpoize. The king of Prussia himself made a convention with Great Britain, but had not included in his agreement that the house of Austria should become so powerful. In treaties between Sovereigns, it is always understood, that the party in favour of whom a neutrality is observed, shall not increase his forces beyond a certain relative proportion: now the house of Brandenburg has more to fear from that of Austria than from any other in Europe; so he kept himself a mere spectator of the war, whilst the losses of France and the emperor were inconsiderable; but on the queen's making a rapid progress, he armed to stop her career. I have since frequently asked the Marshal de Noailles, one of the greatest politicians in France, why Sovereign Princes make no scruple to commit these breaches of faith, which in common life are reckoned intolerable vices? His constant answer was, that these infractions were necessary, and that Europe even owed its safety to them: were it not for such failures, the universal commonwealth would soon be made subject to one single prince; and this he might compass, only by once bringing the others to stand neuter.

The King of Prussia's first step, after his new alliance with France, was, to march with a powerful army towards Prague. Whilst all France was rejoicing at Frederic's successes, advice came that the King was taken ill at Metz, and the symptoms were grown very dangerous: this caused a general affliction; I remember every body was in tears. These cordial marks of affection are a higher praise, and express his character better than all the flattering

tering strokes with which writers will disfigure his history. I have talked with many who were present at the death of Lewis XIV. and according to them, not a tear was shed in France. Nobody was afflicted with the news; and his death was quite forgot before he was buried; heroism being less esteemed than goodness; and Lewis XV. is the best Prince that ever sat on a throne.

The beloved Monarch recovered, and then the nation's joy exceeded its former consternation. He laid siege to Friburg in Brisgau, and razed its fortifications, as he had demolished those of other places which had yielded to his arms: A policy, which, perhaps, may prevent many wars hereafter.

M. de Maurepas was saying one day to me on this head, that the Turks and Persians have scarce any fortified places, and that was the reason of their seldom making war on one another. I have since heard, that most of our wars in Europe were owing to this; that states confided too much in bastions and citadels, which hindered negociations from taking effect. If so, the famous Vauban, whose genius is so often extolled, must have done a great deal of mischief to France.

In the mean time, the King of Prussia, who by arming in favour of France, had changed all the German systems, decamped from Prague; his army fled before that of Prince Charles, who, repassing the Rhine in the sight of the French, crossed the Elbe to attack the Prussians. I never could come at a certain knowledge of this Prince Charles, who directed most of the plans of this war; some speaking so very well of him, and others so very ill, that I have not been able to form any settled judgment of his character.

Marshal Noailles, who knows men, has told me that

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Marchioness of POMPADOUR.

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that this Prince wanted neither talents nor genius, but that the goodness of his heart frustrated the qualities of his mind. Instead of having a will of his own, added he, he suffers himself to be directed by those about him; and these are not always the best head-pieces in the world. For instance, continued he, Prince Charles is now at Brussels as Governor of the Low Countries; but there is a German about him, who turns and winds him at his pleasure, and his pleasure is not always what should be.

The Austrian power, which had been weakened by the king of Prussia's joining with France, now received an increase by an alliance with the Elector of Saxony, King of Poland. This Monarch changed measures for the same reason which had induced the King of Prussia to change.

All parties in these treaties deceived each other. France looked for mighty advantages from a diversion which the King of Prussia was making only for himself; and the King of Poland, who had engaged to furnish the Queen with thirty thousand men, had a part of Silesia given to him, which now did not belong to her.

Elevated with this alliance, and especially the assistance of England, the council at Vienna hoped not only to recover Silesia, but even to reduce French Flanders. They certainly did not consider that Lewis XV. had committed the security of it to one, who was most likely to give a good account of it to the kingdom: This was Count Maurice of Saxony.

Other officers owe their abilities to age, reflection and experience, but he was born a General. His very enemies (and these at Versailles were not few) have done him this justice, that never man surpassed him for a quick and comprehensive penetration.

tion. He instantly discerned what other commanders discovered only by time and circumstances. Maurice not only foresaw events, but also produced them; so that he may in some measure be said to have determined fate. This general made war geometrically, never coming to a battle till he had in demonstration gained it. He was said also to be possessed of the great Turenne's distinguishing qualities, that is, to harrafs and perplex the enemy by his dexterity in encamping and decamping; a kind of petty war, which seldom fails of leading to great advantages.

This picture, however, is none of my own; I only speak after some of the trade, who used to talk to me in this manner.

Whilst the war was prospering abroad, things went wrong at home. The King was at a loss for ministers. The Count de Maurepas put the marine in as good a condition as the English and the state of affairs would allow: but the other departments were in a terrible disorder. The foreign affairs were offered to one Villeneuve, an old man, who had been a long time ambassador at the Porte, where, though his merit has been much cried up, he had ruined the Turkey trade, by turning merchant himself. He came home from his embassy with immense riches, chiefly extorted from the merchants of Marseilles. His principal qualities were management and parsimony. These virtues, so much countenanced by Cardinal Fleury, were greatly in vogue at Versailles. Niggardliness bore the sway. The decrepid ambassador declined the post, doubtless as being attended with more pains than profit. Besides, I have heard those who knew him personally, say, that he was not in the least fit for that branch of government. His abilities had been much talked of, for having brought about a peace between the Porte and the house of Austria;

Austria; but at Constantinople, these sort of negotiations are carried on without a minister's having any great share in them. I have it from M. de Maurepas, that the chief instrument in that affair, was a French linguist, one de Laria, who was perfectly well acquainted with the temper of the Turks, and had been employed by Villeneuve in that negociation.

In the mean time, affairs in Italy did not go so well as could be wished; Don Philip had taken and retaken Savoy, but could not make his way into the country of Placentia.

The King of Naples, whom only a captain of an English ship had compelled to a neutrality, because he was not in a condition to arm, broke it as soon as he had got himself in readiness for war.

He had advanced as far as Veletri, where Prince Lobkowitz endeavouring to surprise him, was himself surprised. The loss was great on both sides, and, as I have heard from very experienced officers, the case was then as it almost ever is on such occasions, they both weakened themselves, and without any advantage even to the victor.

Lobkowitz fled before the King of Naples, who pursued him into the Ecclesiastical State; so that Rome itself was in a consternation, on seeing two armies at its gates.

A small event, which fell out at this time in Germany, shews the great injustice of war, in making the belligerent powers overlook the very laws of nations, which should every where be inviolable.

The King had sent Marshal Belleisle to several German courts in quality of his ambassador, and, as such, he was negotiating the affairs of the crown: yet this minister, in his way along the skirts of the country of Hanover, was seized, and sent over to England as a state prisoner.

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This general was treated with great regard, and one of the royal seats appointed for his residence; but this splendid hospitality only the more exposed the injustice of that nation.

The Marshal has since told me, that he was not at all sorry for his detention, as it had given him an opportunity of studying the temper of that capricious people in their own country. I have heard him say a hundred times that a Briton was the riddle of human nature; he would say, it is easy to discern what the bulk of the nation is, but there is no knowing the individuals. According to him, a definition may be given of the English in general, but it is impossible to say what an Englishman is.

Vienna, Berlin and Versailles, were busied in the same plans which had been concerted in the council, when an unforeseen event brought on some change in the dispositions. Charles VII. that unfortunate emperor, who had not known a moment's quiet on the august throne of the Cæsars, died. If it be nature only which can make men happy, he was of all men the most miserable. He had long laboured under great pains and sufferings from the badness of his constitution; and ambition, which is ever the predominant distemper in sovereigns, added to his bodily pains: amidst his infirmities, all his thoughts were about securing himself on a throne, which the ill state of his health was soon to deprive him of. Many were the vicissitudes of his reign. He was once very near being without a place to hide his head. He has often been obliged to quit his capital, and shift his abode; so that the successor of the masters of the world was sometimes without either house or home.

He was paid by France for being Emperor. He had an allowance of six millions of livres to support a rank which, for that very reason, did not belong to him. They who are acquainted with the causes

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of the rise and fall of the houses, say, that the mis-
fortunes of that of Bavaria were owing to its alliance
with that of Bourbon; and this, it seems, will
ever be the case of petty states uniting with the
greater.

On the decease of Charles VII. France looked
out for an Emperor in Germany; for that Charles's
son could quietly succeed his father, was impossi-
ble. He was not of a proper age; neither had he
the means to maintain himself on the Imperial
throne, even had there been an intention to place
him on it: yet was he thought of, but no farther
than in appearance; it was only a feigned scheme.
A very sensible man was lately saying to me,
There is a meanness in princes which I cannot for-
give: they feign to wish what they do not intend,
and yet act as if they did intend it. This duplicity
has cost the lives of multitudes of brave men, and
ruins the commonwealth.

Some fruitless strokes were again struck for in-
suring the Imperial sceptre to a Prince, who was
known not to be able to keep it; but the young
Elector, with more wisdom than his father, re-
nounced a throne on which his allies could not
maintain him, and thereby did more good to
France, than could have accrued to her from the
most happy successes of her policy.

A tender was then made to the King of Poland;
and in this choice, France had the advantage of
detaching from the house of Austria a powerful
Sovereign. It has been said that the Elector of
Saxony declined the empire: but Marshal Belleisle
told me, that he could not accept of it, and that
he saw the impracticability of such a thing, on the
very first mention made to him of it. A King of
Poland,

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Poland, Emperor of Germany, would have thrown all the northern courts into a flame; and this double Monarch would have had as many wars on his hands, as there were then Sovereigns in Germany. Thus seeing the impossibility of such an acquisition, he made a merit with the Queen of Hungary of his inability, entering into a closer alliance with her, for placing the great Duke of Tuscany, her spouse, on the throne of the Cæsars. Could it be thought that policy was no motive herein, the King of Poland might be accounted a Prince of eminent probity. He had a defensive treaty with the Queen of Hungary, so that he sacrificed his ambition to that alliance; a very rare procedure in the history of sovereigns!

The Prince of Soubise, talking over these matters with me, said, that the irregularity of the treaties in Germany, after the death of Charles VII. had forced France to be more regular in its conduct relating to the northern affairs; and ever since it has kept itself to a defensive war, which certainly was its only proper policy.

Germany being left to itself, Flanders became the seat of action. Maurice had prepared every thing there for one of those bold strokes which determine the destiny of states. He laid siege to Tournay, the King himself being present in person; this siege endangered Holland, which on this occasion was eager for coming to blows.

It was with astonishment I read in the annals of those times, that this tribe of merchants, who have no thoughts beyond trade and parsimony, should now have been the first in calling for a battle, the loss of which might have been fatal to the republic.

The

The battle of Fontenoy was fought, and the allies lost it. This victory has made a great noise in the world; but by the detail which a general officer at my desire gave me of it, I do not find it to be one of those events which greatly heighten a nation's glory.

The French army was much more numerous than the allies, and both the King and Dauphin were present; the presence of these two Princes, thus eye-witnesses of the bravery of their troops, created a second courage, which in gaining victories goes farther than the first: the magazines were full; the soldiers wanted for nothing; the household-troops were there; and the whole was commanded by an experienced general, whom the troops idolized, as capable of the greatest enterprizes: the Princes of the blood, the Dukes, Peers, and almost all the nobility of the kingdom, fought along with the soldiery, sharing their dangers and glory; in a word, the whole French monarchy was present at Fontenoy. If, with all these advantages, the allies had got the better, there would have been an end of the monarchy; for the enemy was marching to the gates of Paris. I am far from intending here to lessen the glory of Marshal Saxe, who conducted the action.

He has often given me an account of it since the peace, and I find that here, tho' then very low in health, he surpassed himself. His thoughts were every where, and he remedied every thing: whatever an able commander could do, he really performed. Some persons of the trade, however, have affirmed to me, that very great faults were committed that day; and that to repair them, it was frequently necessary to disobey the General's orders.

ders. The Duke de Biron took on himself to keep the post of Antoin, though he had been expressly ordered to quit it. But in my opinion, one of the most considerable was, leaving the King and the Dauphin, during the whole action, on the spot where they had placed themselves. A general rout, and this rout was two or three times very near happening, would have exposed France to the worst of misfortunes.

It has been said in several histories, that the Marshal was so confident of gaining the battle, that he made no doubt of it; but he has often told me himself, that two or three times he apprehended it lost, and that he had always doubted of the victory till the household had charged. One evident proof of his uncertainty was, his sending two or three times to the King to withdraw.

I was extremely uneasy about this important event, when a letter was brought me from his Majesty. I opened it with trembling hands, and found it as follows:

From the camp at Fontenoy, an hour after the battle.

“MADAM,

“I saw all lost, till Marshal Saxe retrieved all;
 “he has surpassed himself in this action; my
 “troops fought with invincible courage; the
 “household especially performed wonders; I owe
 “the victory to that corps. The French noblesse
 “fought under my eye; it was with pleasure I
 “beheld their heroic valour.”

* * * * *

These three lines were in cyphers.

This

This letter was very acceptable, and removed all my fears.

From the time of the King's departure from France, I had often converse with the Abbe de Bernis, who had been recommended to me to keep me company during the King's absence.

He had been introduced into the great world by women; for he had all those little talents with which our sex are so taken, compliance, affability, genteel ways, suppleness, gaiety, fluency of speech, a smooth tongue, a pretty knack at versifying, and all those qualities set off with a very handsome person.

This Abbe was never at a loss for well turned compliments to the ladies, so that he was always welcome among the sex. As in our first conversations he never dropt the least intimation about presentment; I imagined that, at last, I had met with my worthy person, one whose noble soul soared above riches and honour. But I was mistaken; this Abbe was eaten up with a desire of court distinction, concealing an unbounded ambition under a hypocritical disinterestedness. His apartment, as I have been informed, was, as it were, a perfect ware-house of memoirs; some related to the farms of the revenues, others to œconomy, some concerning war, some the navy, and others the finances. He had a wonderful readiness at forming projects. He could scheme any thing he had a mind to.

The action of Fontenoy led the way to other conquests in Austrian Flanders, and the Flemings every where received Lewis XV. with the loudest acclamations. I have read in most of the revolu-

tions of the world, that the people greatly rejoice at a change of masters.

This victory caused a general revolution; the Germans and English determined to break into the kingdom. They made their way by Provence and Bretagne, but they only shewed themselves. The Austrians passed the Var, and then repassed it. The English landed and returned to their ships. Our modern history is full of these military follies. Posterity will ever be at a loss why General Sinclair, who commanded in this expedition, after bringing a French city to capitulate, moved off without reaping the fruits of the capitulation.

They who shall read the annals of our age, will scarce believe that the cabinets of Europe could have committed so many faults, and that the Generals of armies could have fallen into so many errors.

The Genoese, who had introduced the Spaniards into Italy, were forsaken by them; so that the state of Genoa was invaded by the Austrians, who even made themselves masters of the capital. They first required of the Genoese what money they had, and after stripping them, demanded still more.

In the mean time the German army was in pursuit of the French and Spaniards, and crossing the Var after them, took post in Provence. Botta, in whose care the city had been left, and who was at St. Peter des Arenes, forgot that he had no army to keep it, and that what remained in that suburb, was only a sickly half-dead multitude; the consequence of which was a sudden revolution, too strong for him to suppress.

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The Genoefe, whom a large army had awed into fubmiffion, recovered their freedom on its departure. Here Botta was guilty of a great overfight; he propofed to the fenate to join him againft the rebels, as he called them, not perceiving that they underhand encouraged the infurrection: they readily promifed to act in concert with him; but this was only to give the people time to gather and unite their ftrength: it was too late when the general came to be aware of their defign; he fled with fuch precipitancy, as to leave all his magazines behind.

The King fhewed me a letter fent to court from a Genoefe Senator, giving a particular account of the whole tranfaction; the beginning, progrefs, and end of the fcheme laid for fhaking off the Austrian yoke. The great council had for fome time fecretly promoted it. It was not fetting the Genoefe to draw cannon, which occafioned its revolution; it might indeed haften the execution of it; but the plan had been concerted long before: thus is pofterity often mifled in hiftories, attributing to accident what was the effect of premeditated defign.

This deliverance was attended with another happinefs to Genoa; it had at that time no citizen who could have deprived the Republic of its liberty. The juncture was extremely favourable; the people had got the whole power of the ftate into their hands. Now I have heard our politicians fay, that on fuch junctures, giving money, and granting privileges, will carry every point.

This revolution, which feemed only a private concern, changed the fystem of general affairs.

The Austrians, who intended to befiege Toulon,

and lay Marseilles under contribution, were obliged to repass the Var, for want both of shelter and provisions.

The court of Vienna, inflamed at this event, blocked up Genoa, and threatened the inhabitants with the severest treatment, if they did not immediately surrender; but the Genoese, being supported by the French, made a vigorous resistance, without being intimidated by menaces; and Boufflers, and afterwards the Duke de Richlieu, were sent to command there. M. Maurepas has often told me, that it was a great over-sight in the English, who blocked up Genoa by sea, in not having a number of flat-bottomed boats to hinder any French succours from getting into Genoa.

This precaution would have changed the whole disposition of affairs in Italy. Genoa, then incapable of any further resistance, must have surrendered to the Austrians, and the Infant Don Philip, the subject of the war, would never have seen Parma and Placentia.

Lewis XV. after taking seven fine cities in Flanders, returned to Paris; and it may be said that never was such joy displayed in that city, as at the sight of this Prince; every street rang with shouts of gladness and applause.

Amidst the many checks which England had met with in Flanders, the Pretender conveyed himself into Scotland. As he had neither armies nor ships, some courtiers said, *he had swam thither*. It was not very difficult to foresee the issue of this enterprize, every step and circumstance of it being irregular. A very intelligent man told me at that time, that the most fortunate thing which could happen to the Pretender, would

be

be to get out of Scotland as clandestinely as he got in: but he was a young man, rather fond of executing his projects in a singular manner, than concerned about the success of them.

This enterprize, however ill conducted, had one advantage for Versailles, that it caused a diversion in England. France has always made use of the house of Stuart for its private views. I am sorry that George II. who wanted neither courage nor firmness, should have shewn any uneasiness at it. An English nobleman told me, that he caused the London militia to take an oath, that they did not in any-wise believe that the pope had ever a right of causing Princes to be murdered. He also had the records of Rochester searched, for the form of the excommunication anciently denounced by the Popes, to stimulate the English against the see of Rome. I would not have Princes stoop to trifles, which always betray a weak mind; a prince on the throne should act with magnanimity.

The Pretender published a manifesto in vindication of his rights, addressed to the people of England; but this manifesto contained only empty words, whilst George had on his side troops and cannon.

Marshal Belleisle more than once took notice to me of a remarkable passage in this manifesto. Prince Edward there owns that the house of Stuart lost the English throne in some measure by its own fault, and promises amendment. *If, says he, the complaints formerly brought against our family did take their rise from some errors in our administration; it has sufficiently expiated them.* — Young Edward took possession of the kingdoms

of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, in his father's name, declaring himself regent. For England well and good; but thus to make a king of France, was too hasty. Those titles, however, resting on no surer grounds than the possession, as quickly disappeared.

At this time France endeavoured to keep the Dutch neuter; both courts published manifestoes, and the ministers negotiated: but this project of neutrality produced only a fresh paper war. The Abbe de la Ville presented memorials drawn up with great pomp and accuracy of stile, and he was answered with an elegant conciseness; but fighting still went on.

The face of affairs in Germany had changed; the King of Prussia acknowledged the Great Duke of Tuscany Emperor, and made his peace with the house of Austria. I have often heard a smart saying of Marshal Belleisle on this head. *I very well knew, said he, that this man, who is so fond of war, would incline to peace on the first opportunity to his advantage.*

M. Soubise more than once said to me, *That Monarch would have owned the Pope for Emperor, had any Sovereign in Germany given him only a hundred square acres of land.* This peace was so far advantageous to France, as it diminished the power of the house of Austria. Apparently Italy alone would be the sufferer, as it was to be supposed that the Queen of Hungary, being quite at leisure in Germany, would be for fighting on the other side the Alps. She sent reinforcements to the Low Countries, which, however, could not hinder Marshal Saxe from taking Brussels. It was then that Lewis XV. to compleat the conquest of Austrian

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Austrian Flanders, set out to command the army in person.

Our progresses were very rapid; the King's presence, and the soldiers confidence in Marshal Saxe's abilities, made every thing easy. It was otherwise with the Pretender in Scotland, who fled before the enemy, and at length lost a decisive battle against the Duke of Cumberland.

In these circumstances it was that M. d'Argenson wrote, though indirectly, to the English government, in favour of young Edward. A man of wit has since shewed me how extremely ridiculous this was; for had there been a design that Edward should not out-live his temerity, a better method could not have been invented for having him made away with.

That minister represented him to the court as a relation of the King's, for whose person and qualities this Monarch had the highest value. He insisted that King George was a Prince of too much equity, not to perceive the Pretender's son's merit. This manifesto afterwards told the English, that they ought to admire him for those qualities of an eminent patriot, which so conspicuously shone in him. It then proceeded to the dangerous consequences which might result to England, from any severe treatment to young Edward, &c. They did not see that this declaration must have produced a quite contrary effect to that proposed. The Pretender's crime was not his coming over to Scotland, but in being France's ally. Consistent people said, either Prince Edward is a rebel, or King George is an usurper; and Sovereigns should not countenance rebels, nor solicit usurpers.

The

The invention of this intercessory letter is fathered on a Cardinal, who being a member of the sacred college, was for securing the Pretender's retreat; whereas it was the very way to obstruct it. Accordingly England, making no account of this manifest, set a price on his head, and some Lords who had taken up arms for him, were publicly beheaded.

Whilst all the Princes of Europe were at war together, their ministers were repairing to Breda, to negotiate a peace. This necessarily increased the business of cabinets, having both military and pacific operations on the carpet. The dearth of ministers still continued in France; none could be found capable of healing the public misfortunes. M. d'Argenton, who had the foreign affairs, only increased the confusion. They were committed to M. de Puyseux, who was then at Breda, where he was ordered to feign great zeal and assiduity in bring about a definitive treaty; this was only a feint, he was in reality employed at Versailles. On his nomination, he said to the King, *Sire, I will do all I can, but I beg your Majesty to believe that I cannot work miracles.*

Marshal Saxe humorously said, *None but a saint or a devil can set the French administration right.* This gave occasion to a courtier afterwards to say, that we must be without friends, both in hell and heaven; this so much wanted saint or devil having not yet made his appearance in France.

Marshal Belleisle, having driven the Austrians out of Provence, returned to Versailles, to give the King an account of his operations. He had a strange passion for signal projects; and he proposed several to his Majesty, the least of which

was

was to deliver Genoa, to make Spain mistress of the greater part of Italy, and strip the King of Sardinia of all his dominions, &c.

He was sent again to Provence, where the sum of his exploits amounted only to the taking of the small castle of Saint Margaret's island. A man of genius was lately saying to me, that if good chimerical projects, and imaginary plans, made a man great, M. Belleisle was indisputably the greatest man in Europe.

In the mean time Holland, having created a Stadtholder, determined on the continuance of the war. I saw that Lewis XV. was manifestly affected with this news, whether from a concern for his people, or that the elevation of the Prince of Orange disconcerted his projects. He said in my presence to a courtier, *These Dutchmen are terrible folks; I wish their republic was a thousand leagues from any of my frontiers; it gives me more trouble than all the rest of Europe put together.*

France having now no hopes of bringing the United Provinces to a neutrality, thought of invading them; and politicians said, that it was the only way left to restore the balance in Europe, which had been lost by the continual advantages of the English at sea.

Effectual measures were taken for the invasion. The King won the battle of Lafeldt. At the same time it was determined to besiege Bergen-op-Zoom. This expedition was committed to count Lowendahl, who merrily promised to make a present of it to the King on St. Lewis's day. Bergen-op-Zoom was taken, which threw the Dutch into the greatest consternation, as they
had

had all imagined the carrying of that place to be an impossibility. This event shewed, that in war there is no such thing as certainty, its operations being ever subject to the caprice and inconsistency of fortune.

The congress at Breda was removed to Aix-la-Chapelle; but the courts still continued planning sieges and battles. Whilst the plenipotentiaries were settling the preliminaries, the levies for fresh troops went on with all possible vigour, and France prepared for war more than ever; but the difficulty was to procure soldiers. It has been affirmed to me, that there were large country-towns in France, which could not furnish so much as one militia-man; so that it became necessary to make the married men carry arms, though this was hurting posterity. All manner of taxes and imposts were also contrived to supply the want of money. M. Machault, comptroller-general, who had succeeded M. Orry, proposed expedients, but all of a very destructive tendency. The parliament clamoured, and openly declared in its representations, that if all the edicts concerning the finances took place, as proposed, the kingdom was undone; but it received for answer, that great evils required great remedies; and this silenced it.

At length a way being opened into Holland, by the taking of Bergen-op-Zoom, and Marshal Saxe threatening to put an end to the republic; on the other hand, the southern provinces of France being reduced to a starving condition; this, with other circumstances, disposed the several powers to sign preliminaries of peace, which was soon followed by a definitive treaty.

treaty. Such a situation of things promoted the public tranquillity more than all the studied harangues of the plenipotentiaries at Aix-la-Chapelle.

I had the treaty read to me at Versailles; all the articles appeared very suitable to the present state of Europe, except that of Canada. It seemed to me that the appointing commissioners to settle that great affair, would only perplex it the more. I spoke of it to Marshal Belleisle, who told me that article was a state secret: we could have given it another turn, but this is best for us; it leaves things in America as they are, and we have twenty savage nations in Canada who will revenge our loss. This revenge some years after cost us the game.

The Prince de Soubise told me some time after, that this peace had been a child of necessity; that there was not one of all the signing Princes, who could not have wished that the war had continued. Yet I can take upon me to say, that the King of France was of a different mind. He was visibly more gay than usual, and the great joy of his heart displayed itself in his countenance.

Thus at length the public calamities were suspended. Genoa, which under the Duke de Richlieu had continued to defend itself against the Germans, grounded its arms. The Spaniards and French, after being in continual action to settle Don Philip in Italy, discontinued their operations; and it was agreed that every thing should remain quiet till the publication of the definitive treaty. I longed for it more than

than any minister in Europe. The King had no quiet ; the concerns of his crown and personal glory kept him in Flanders, and took up all his thoughts, never returning to Versailles till the campaign was quite over. My private satisfaction I could have willingly sacrificed to the happiness of the state, but sieges and battles only encreased the public distresses.

New lotteries and new taxes were established to raise the means for signing the peace ; thus the public ease began with draining them to the last drop.

The Pretender's son, who seemed quite forgotten, now makes his appearance again. Concluding, as he well might, that nobody would think of him at the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle ; he began by protesting against every thing which should be done there. So little regard was paid to the manifesto which he caused to be set up, that all parties signed without minding his protestations. To this opposition he added another still more extravagant at Paris, refusing to comply even with the King's express orders.

One of the first articles laid down between England and France, had been, that the Chevalier de St. George's son should quit the kingdom. Lewis XV. several times signified to him the indispensable necessity he was under of adhering to the agreement. Prince Edward plainly told those who first mentioned the King's pleasure to him, that he would not comply. I have often heard the excuse he gave for this refractoriness. *The King of France, said he, promised me that I should always find an asylum*
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in his dominions; for this I have his sign manual in my pocket. A Prince who has a sense of honour, knows what obligations his word lays him under, and how greatly he exposes himself in violating it.

He treated with the King of France as with a private gentleman. He forgot that Sovereigns may fail in their word, without any breach in their honour, the good of their people so requiring. The Pretender's son was taken into custody, as he was going to the opera. Strange reverse of fortune! On his arrival in France, he had been received with great joy, and marks of consideration. I was something concerned for this young Prince's fate, and dropped a word or two about him to the King, who answered me with some heat, *What would you have me do, Madam? Should I continue the war with all Europe for Prince Edward? England will not allow him to be in my dominions; it was only on this condition, that she came into the peace. Should I have broke off the conference at Aix-la-Chapelle, and distressed my people more and more, because the Pretender's son is for living at Paris?*

It must be owned that this Prince shewed an obstinacy beyond example. The King sent all Paris to represent to him the state of affairs, and express the concern it gave him, that he was obliged to remove him from his court. Though these messages were delivered to him in the King's name, his answers were so many menaces. The Count de Maurepas spoke to him on this occasion, in the following words:

“ It is with the greatest grief that the King
“ sees

“ sees himself obliged to desire your Highness
 “ to quit his dominions. I come in his name
 “ to assure you that no other consideration than
 “ the welfare of his subjects would have pre-
 “ vailed on him to take this step. You would
 “ have seen him inflexibly supporting your
 “ claim, had not the unhappy turn of the
 “ war laid him under a necessity of yielding to
 “ the present juncture. The greatest Monarchs
 “ cannot always do as they would. There are
 “ critical seasons where policy requires them
 “ to be pliant. Your Highness knows that;
 “ since the unhappy time when the Stuart
 “ family lost the crown of England, the
 “ Bourbon family has made several efforts for
 “ their restoration. You ought to take his
 “ intentions kindly, rather than blame his in-
 “ ability. I wish you had been witness to his
 “ conversation with me, when he called me
 “ into his closet to give me his orders, by which
 “ I was to signify to you his desire that you will
 “ quit the kingdom; it must have affected you.
 “ He sincerely laments your situation, but he
 “ cannot turn the tide of fate; and should you
 “ force him to take violent measures, it would
 “ give him the deepest concern.

“ Lewis XV. has sent me to you, not as a
 “ King, not as a master, but as an ally, and as a
 “ friend; and, what is more, he directed me to
 “ ask it of you as a favour, that you would leave
 “ his dominions.”

Prince Edward was very laconic in his answer,
 drawing a pistol out of his pocket, and vowing
 to shoot the first man that should offer to lay hands
 on him. The archbishop of Paris likewise con-
 jured

jured him in the name of God and the Pope, but with no greater effect; religion had no more weight with him than politics, so that the extremity which the King would have avoided, became necessary. The Chevalier de St. George's son was arrested as he was going to the opera.

The enemies of France failed not to exclaim against this violence, exaggerating it with the most odious appellations.

On searching his house, it was found turned into an Arsenal. He had arms enough to stand a siege in form. It was talked at court that he had determined to fight singly himself against a whole regiment, and then set fire to a barrel of powder, which communicated with others, and thus blow up himself, with all that belonged to him. The King, on being told this, said, "A very ill-timed bravery, indeed!"

The peace, however, spread an universal joy through all ranks. There were only two men in the kingdom who were not satisfied with it, the Marshals Saxe and Lowendahl. The former expressed his discontent to the secretary of war in this manner: "After the battle of Fontenoy," said he, "we were in a fair way of making ourselves masters of Holland, and putting an end to that troublesome republic; for these merchants, with their shipping and their wealth, are the mischief-makers of Europe; they are the necessary allies of our natural enemies the English. The great work of their destruction was nearly finished; why did we not go through with it? If we again give the republicans time to fortify themselves, they will be as daring as before; and the time may come when France
" with

“ with all its forces will not be able to bring them
 “ to reason. Destroying Holland is cutting off
 “ England’s right arm ; and every body knows,
 “ that all France’s policy should center in weak-
 “ ening Great-Britain.

“ Of what consequence has the victory of Fon-
 “ tenoy been ? What is France the better for the
 “ taking of Bergen-op-Zoom ? All those efforts
 “ of courage, all the lives of so many gallant
 “ officers who fell in Flanders, were purely
 “ thrown away. If these places were to be re-
 “ stored, and the Dutch and the house of Austria
 “ to be put on the same footing as each of them
 “ was before the war, it had been much better
 “ there had been no war at all. France’s giving
 “ back its conquests, was making war against her-
 “ self ; her very victories have ruined her ; her
 “ enemies have retained all their former strength,
 “ whilst she alone has weakened herself. Her
 “ subjects are fewer by a million, and her finances
 “ reduced to little or nothing.”

These speeches reaching the King’s ears, he
 said, “ I understand the language of those genera-
 “ lissimos ; they are for ever dwelling on red-hot
 “ bullets.”

The count de St. Severin d’Arragon, who had
 made the peace, undertook to demonstrate the
 fallacy of such reasonings ; and the King has often
 repeated to me his arguments. “ Sire, said he,
 “ the conquest of Holland made no part of the
 “ plan of this war. All France aimed at, was to
 “ keep the Dutch from declaring. The end of
 “ our many sieges and battles, was not to destroy
 “ their republic, but only to bring it to pacific
 “ terms ; so that in forcing them to lay aside
 “ their

“ their arms, the council or State’s view is fully
“ answered.

“ Your Generals will have it, that after the
“ battle of Fontenoy, and the taking of Bergen-
“ op-Zoom, the United Provinces might easily
“ have been over-run, and the States-General
“ have been brought under the dominion of
“ France. They are mistaken ; the weapons of
“ despair are invincible. To compel a people to
“ the necessity of being conquered, is the ready
“ way to lose a conquest. The sovereignties once
“ settled, are no longer subject to destruction ;
“ they are reciprocal counterpoizes ; should only
“ one fall under the power of another, the whole
“ balance of Europe would be destroyed. It is
“ long since war has afforded any of those decisive
“ blows, which, in the time of the Romans,
“ changed the face of the political world. A pro-
“ vince may be mastered, but the invading of
“ kingdoms is out of date.

“ Granting, Sir, that the ardour of your
“ troops, breaking through the common ways,
“ had reduced Holland, it would have been a
“ conquest not only useless, but have thrown
“ France into fresh troubles ; all Europe, in a
“ body, would have declared war against you.
“ The great powers, jealous of the house of
“ Bourbon, have long been watching an opportu-
“ nity of giving it a decisive blow.

“ Right policy, instead of making a noise, silent-
“ ly takes a bye-way to its ends ; let us insensibly
“ weaken the Dutch, but never think of destroy-
“ ing them. They are a barrier against the great
“ northern powers. They secure us from the
“ incursions of the Germans, whom the Romans
“ them-

“ themselves could not check, and who at last
 “ overthrew the empire of the Cæsars.

“ But a great deal is said about the easiness of
 “ our conquering, and not a word how easy it
 “ was to conquer us. What induced me, Sire,
 “ to put the finishing hand to the great work of
 “ the peace, is the disorder of the finances, the
 “ depopulation of the state, and the scarcity of
 “ provisions.

“ The Comptroller-general has acquainted me
 “ that he knows not where to find any more mo-
 “ ney. The intendants of the provinces have
 “ wrote to the war-office, that it is utterly im-
 “ possible to raise another militia; to which the
 “ intendant of Guienne adds, that in his province
 “ the people are starving; those, Sire, were my
 “ motives for hastening the conclusion of the
 “ peace.”

These reasons, however, did not prevail with the great men of the army, who still wanted to be fighting. They were big with hopes, which the peace seemed to quash. I remember Lewis XV. one day talking on this subject, said to me, *that he had not a general officer in his troops who cared what became of the state, if he could but get a Marshal's staff,*

The King, who had rewarded Marshal Saxe, did not forget the Count St. Severin, making him a minister of state. This Count, though not a great genius, had good rational sense, which he made to answer as well as a superior understanding. He was slow in business, but sure; and his phlegmatic disposition was better adapted to surmount those difficulties, which ever put fervid and eager minds to a
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full stand. He was a stranger to agitations; his passions moved in subordination to political laws. Resentment, anger, sallies of passion, spirit of party, with all the other prepossessing foibles which ruled most ministers, were never seen in him. Those he used to call the reverse of the medal of plenipotentiaries. In a negotiation he moved straight on to his drift, without stopping by the way. He had a natural love for peace, and thus the more cheerfully applied himself to forward a definitive treaty.

M. de Belleisle told me, that he found one great fault in him, which was the want of a proper regard to military men, however illustrious by their rank or merit; for after all, added he, there is no making a good peace but by dint of victories; and it is the general, and not the plenipotentiary, who gains battles.

France however was quite spent; the means made use of for supporting the war had been so violent as to break all the springs of power. The ministers complained greatly of the state of France, and openly said, at the peace, that they did not know where to begin the administration.

Paris is not the place where the general distress most manifests itself. The luxury, such as it is, prevailing there conceals the public indigence. There poverty itself appears in embroidery and ribbons, whilst in all the other parts of France it goes quite bare. The court had written into the provinces for a report of the state of things. M. de Belleisle has shewn me

me several memoirs of those times, transmitted to Versailles by the intendants of the provinces. The tenour of the first was this :

“ MY LORD,

“ You ask me for a state of the finances in
 “ this province ; that is soon done ; there are
 “ none. I don’t believe that the whole pro-
 “ vince could produce a hundred thousand livres
 “ in specie: the poverty is so general, that all
 “ distinction of ranks is at an end. The louis
 “ d’ors are like to become scarce pieces, so
 “ as soon to be seen only in the cabinets of
 “ the curious.”

The other is from the intendant of a province naturally very fertile, but which could not be cultivated for want of money. His report to the minister was as follows :

“ MY LORD,

“ There is no representing to your Excellency
 “ the present distress of this province ; the
 “ land yields little or nothing ; most of the
 “ farmers, unable to live by the produce of
 “ their farms, have quitted them ; some are
 “ gone a begging, others have listd in the
 “ army, and not a few have escaped into fo-
 “ reign countries ; the gentry and nobility are
 “ little better off, being put to the utmost
 “ difficulty to answer the taxes and impositions
 “ on them.

“ Of

" Of fifteen hundred thousand acres of arable land, which used to support this people; at present six hundred lie fallow; what a diminution this must be to the general subsistence, your Excellency readily sees. A village which, before the war, supported fifteen hundred inhabitants, can now scarce support six hundred; and a particular family, which was able to feed six children, and as many labourers, can now provide food only for five. The cattle are diminished no less than the men, so as not to be sufficient for tillage; and in most of the villages men do the work of oxen.

" I have traced this calamity to its source, and I find the evil proceeds from the general want of cash: to prevent the consequences of this diminution, I could wish that the court would be pleased to advance to this province, by way of loan, the sum of fifteen hundred thousand livres, to be geometrically distributed among the industrious poor. This, in my opinion, is the only remedy left to avert greater evils."

The third of these memoirs was from another intendant, who paints the depopulation in these sad colours.

" MY LORD,

" The king's subjects are daily decreasing in this province; it will soon be without inhabitants. Having directed the parish-priests to bring in lists of the christenings and burials, I find that the number of the dead exceeds that of the living; so that, should this depopulation go on twenty years longer, and God continues my life during that time, by my calculation, I shall be the only living creature, of the human species, in this province. Fifteen years before the last

" revolution of the finances, this district contained
 " fifteen hundred thousand souls, and now if there
 " are nine hundred thousand, it is the most. Yet
 " how, my Lord, can it be otherwise? Of fifty
 " of the king's subjects, scarce two have any
 " thing of a subsistence; the others must neces-
 " sarily perish. A marriage is seldom heard of;
 " so that all the new-born children are the fruits
 " of debauchery.

" I cannot point out any remedy to these dis-
 " tresses. In the present crisis of the monarchy,
 " it is God alone who can rescue it out of the
 " abyss into which the misfortunes of the times
 " have cast it."

The fourth was from a sea-port, whose deputy
 thus delivered himself before the ministry.

" Trade, which had been declining for several
 " years, is now fallen into a total stagnation. Our
 " ships lie in the harbours, useless both to the
 " state and their owners. We have little or no
 " thing for exportation; the produce of the coun-
 " try scarce affords a very scanty subsistence; and
 " our manufactures are at the lowest ebb. All
 " our trade is in the hands of the English and
 " Dutch.

" Most of our monied men, who fitted out pri-
 " vateers, have been ruined by the war; others
 " so reduced, that instead of ten ships, which they
 " used to have at sea, they find it difficult to have
 " one: both seas are covered with foreign fleets
 " so that the white flag begins to be forgotten.

" All other nations are carriers to France
 " whereas France carries for none. This genera-
 " l stagnation animates others, and throws our
 " mine into a fatal lethargy, &c. &c. &c."

The navy has been utterly ruined, all the ships
 being taken by the English, except a few un-
 viceable ones in the harbours; and the funds are

pointed

pointed for fitting out a fleet are exhausted; but had there been no want of money, seamen were wanting; most of them had died in English prisons, and they who escaped the enemy perished by distress. It was impossible for France, being thinned of men, to furnish seamen.

M. Belleisle, who interfered in every branch of government, said one day to the King, in my hearing, *Sire, should all the powers of Europe declare war against you, I engage to raise in your dominions a hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, who should keep them all at bay; but were I to fight an English fleet of a hundred ships of the line, where I should get twenty thousand seamen, I know not.*

Another misfortune, beyond any remedy, was the necessary reduction of the troops. A hundred and fifty thousand subjects, who had fought for the crown, at the peace came to want bread: most of them, though they had been husbandmen before the war, were now no longer so. I have several times heard the Marshall de Noailles say, that a countryman, leaving the plough for the musket, is very seldom known to take to it when discharged; and he used to add, that on a hundred thousand husbandmen quitting their labour, a hundred thousand others must labour to provide them bread, otherwise a famine, and the ruin of the state, must be the consequence.

Some regulations were made to prevent the disorders to be apprehended from these reduced troops; but the remedy was more dangerous than the disease to France.

Of all the incumbrances, that of the military rewards were the greatest; money was required to pay the bravery of the officers in ready cash, for the military gentlemen are most impatient creditors. Formerly a St. Lewis's cross sufficed, but

it has since appeared to the officers, that a year's sum gives a greater lustre to gallant actions.

Above ten thousand different pensions were settled on the Exchequer. A churchman who, at my desire, used sometimes to read to me the memorials on this head delivered to me for the king, would often say, that the glory accompanying fine actions must be of very little value in France, as the gentlemen of the army would not take it for a reward. The archbishop of Paris likewise used to say, that victories cost the state more than defeats.

The claimants would set forth their services with an arrogant modesty, which gave great offence to the court; especially they who had lost a limb were quite insupportable. One of these gentlemen (who was indeed after several journies to court to obtain a pension) said to me before several foreign ministers, *Madam, since the King cannot give me an arm, which I have lost in his service, he should at least give me money.*

Once an officer being come express with the news of the loss of a battle in Germany, the king said, *Thank God, this time I shan't be teaz'd about rewards.* He was mistaken; for fifteen hundred officers, who had escaped the slaughter, came to Versailles, clamouring to be paid only for the great service of their being present at that action.

A lieutenant of grenadiers, to whom the secretary at war had procured a Saint Lewis's cross without a pension, said to him, *Sir, your Excellency has tied to my button-hole the sign of my courage, but you have forgot the reality of my bravery,* meaning that he wanted a pension.

Some military men in France enjoy considerable incomes only for having been in five or six battles whilst the subjects of the state have ruined themselves in defraying the expences of the war. Thus do abuses creep into the best foundations.

After settling the pensions, the next thing taken in hand was to retrieve the finances from the terrible disorder into which they were fallen. 'They who understood the history of France affirmed, that for twenty reigns past the kingdom had never been so distressed; and the national debt being immense, a plan for the discharge of them became absolutely necessary. A sinking fund was projected, but when funds were to be appointed for the sinking-fund, those of the crown were found to be all mortgaged. I myself was a witness to his majesty's great uneasiness, when the ministers and counsellors of state laid open to him the condition of things. *Gentlemen*, said he to them, *you had better have advised me against the war, than to take it on such burthensome conditions.* Some taxes were taken off; but several imposts, created for the charges of the war, were continued after the peace, &c. &c.

Such was the situation of France after the definitive treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. The domestic affairs of the crown were in no better condition. The ministers had, during the war, assumed an unlimited authority, made themselves despotic in their offices, and behaved towards the subjects with that austerity which is the result of uncontrouled power.

Whilst all Europe was congratulating itself on the general peace, advice came to Versailles that the English were very angry with George the Second, for having agreed to the French proposals. The parliament addressed him for a copy of the overtures for a general pacification, to be laid before the house.

Marshal Saxe being present when this was related to the king, said, *Sir, those Englishmen must be very quarrelsome; they have made a peace with us, and having now no enemy, they are for quarrelling*

with their King. I have heard very knowing politicians say, that the divisions in Great Britain between the subjects and the Prince, are the basis of the general tranquillity of Europe.

However, on the peace, the face of Versailles was quite changed; that solicitous look which throws a shade even on diversions was quite vanished; the hurry of business had ceased, and the king was now come to himself. This tranquillity of the court caused a great agitation in the city; several women began to form designs on the King's heart.

Among these was one Madame la Poupeliniere married to a financier, who had raised her from the dirt, from whence he himself likewise sprung. They had a most delightful and splendid feast at Passy, which was always crowded with the world's company.

I have been often told, that this woman would faint away whenever my name happened to be mentioned. She used to say, that I had thrust myself into her rank at court, that I held her place about the king, and that all the honours paid to me at Versailles, of right belonged to her. She would, at any rate, be Lewis the Fifteenth's mistress.

This was a scheme put into her head by the Duke de Richelieu; mean time he practised on her heart, to give it a turn for tenderness. This intrigue was carried on with an air of mystery. The Duke used, at nights, to convey himself into the lady's chamber through an opening contrived in the chimney; and this opening Richelieu assured her should, in no long time, conduct her to the little apartments at Versailles. In the interim this creature, to make herself more worthy of the Sovereign, prostituted herself to one of his subjects; but a chamber-maid, in a fit of resentment

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discovered the whole mystery. The financier, who had for some time wanted to get rid of his wife, gladly embraced this opportunity; he made the public witness to his infamy, so that all Paris flocked to see the ungrateful perfidy of this ambitious woman.

The gallant perhaps, now no less satiated than the husband, made very light of the discovery; and came to Versailles, not imagining that the court as yet knew any thing of the matter; but I had intelligence of his adventure an hour before it was made public. The King was alone in my apartment when he came in; Sir, (said I to him) *there is not in all Europe a more close agent in amorous intrigues than his Grace of Richelieu there before you; for to be the more secret with the ladies whom he would bring acquainted with your Majesty, he visits them through the chimney.* The King asked me what I meant; I immediately unfolded the riddle to him, which set us a laughing, and Richelieu himself laughed as much as any.

Other women likewise laid out for the little apartments at Versailles, and got into them without going under ground. Lewis XV. was very fond of these flighty amours, of which possession is both the beginning and end. But his humours did not in the least abate the affection with which he honoured me, always returning to me more constant than ever.

Since the peace, the Count de Maurepas took a pleasure in censuring every thing that was done at court, and giving it a ridiculous turn. This minister had his private suppers like the King himself; and here it was where, every night, the crown was turned into drollery.

Several disputes had passed between us since my living at Versailles, and in which he had used me

with much pride and haughtiness; his passion made him forget his rank, and use words quite unbecoming such a man as he. I slightly intimated it to the King, being unwilling to hurt a man who was of use to the state.

It has been given out, that my very first design on my coming to Versailles, was to supplant the minister. Now that such a thought should have come into my mind, is not possible. The King in giving me a character of his chief ministers, spoke with great approbation of the Count de Maurepas, which alone was sufficient to make me take a liking to him. But a close assiduity in dry and difficult affairs, for above thirty years successively, had extremely soured his temper, so that at times no body durst go near him. M. le Guai, his first clerk, told me, that in those moments he was bristled like a porcupine; his harshness infected his correspondence, scolding those who were a thousand leagues from him, and treating them without any regard to their rank and character. He wrote to the French consul, at one of the Levant ports, in the following manner :

“ I order you, Sir, to write to me no more, but repair to France in the first ship; and come to Paris, where you are to wait my orders, without appearing at court. I am. &c.”

His caustic temper mingled itself even with his feasts, and would break out even in the midst of pleasure and sociality. It was in these parties that he was most fluent and licentious in satire. I was one day informed, that he had spoken against me in very indecent terms, and had even brought in the King. I at first determined flatly to complain to his Majesty, but on reflection I chose to write to himself.

“ Sir,

"Sir, I am informed of your scandalous speeches concerning me, and even the King your master. As for what you say of me, it gives me no manner of concern; but I cannot overlook any scurrility on the King. I value his reputation; and be assured, that if you do not alter your behaviour toward him, I shall lay it before him, and you must expect the punishment which such an offence deserves. I am, &c."

All the effect of this letter was, that it increased his malignity towards me, saying to those who were at supper with him; *Now, Gentlemen, my disgrace is surely at hand, Pompadour threatens me then*, reassuming his gravity, he added, by way of reflection, *See what Versailles is come to; the very women of pleasure pretend to domineer there.* These words were precisely reported to me; however, I took no notice of them; but some time after, this minister, amidst his cups, sang some scandalous couplets against the King himself, and being a great deal of company. Of this insolence I informed his Majesty, and he was ordered to quit the court.

His exile making a great noise in the world, and a construction being put on it which affected his person and character, I begged of the King to declare in public, that he was satisfied with his conduct. His Majesty did so; and let this serve as a specimen of his temper; a prince, after being insolently ridiculed by a subject who owed him great obligations, still vouchsafed to shew tenderness for him.

The government was at a loss for a person fit to succeed M. Maurepas at the head of the marine, as now it was become a state mystery. It had been under Maurepas's sole management during

thirty years. M. Rouillé was pitched on, though no great genius; but he had formed specious plans, and assured the King that within three years he should have a navy of fourscore ships of the line. *I wish,* said the King, *he may make his words good, but I much fear he will fall very short.*

Italy was perfectly at ease; the infant Don Philip had made his entrance into Parma: we heard at Versailles that he lived very gaily there amidst concerts, plays, and balls. *I am afraid,* said the King, *that young Prince is too fond of balls, and my daughter will be perpetually dancing.*

M. de Noailles used to say, that *every country dance of Don Philip, in Italy, cost Spain a hundred thousand livres; and his mother had paid the fiddlers before-hand.*

The Duke of Modena was restored to his dominions, and had all Don Philip's passion for splendour and entertainments; but the war had ruined him: the Duchess used to say openly, in the palace, *his Highness has not wherewith to make one single minuet step.* She came to court without shoes, to shew the King the indigence to which the war had reduced their duchy. *Madam,* said his Majesty to her, *I am not in a much better condition myself; but I have a shoe-maker, who, if you please, shall wait on you.*

Genoa was free, subject only to its own government, now re-established on its ancient footing. The ambassador from the court of Vienna, meeting that senate's envoy in the great gallery of Versailles, said to him; *Sir, the house of Austria gives your republic its revolution, only intends to be with it.*

Rome was at rest, the foreign armies which during the war, had been such a burden and terror to it, being withdrawn.

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Naples, now no longer under a necessity of exhausting itself of men and money, was beginning to recover: all it stood in need of, was only quiet enjoyment of its fertile soil and climate. Concerning this small state, I remember a foreign minister once said to me, that *if ever he had been so ambitious as to aim at a sovereignty, it would not be that of Germany, France, or Spain, but to be King of Naples.* His reason was, that *there the power was derived directly from heaven; and is the immediate gift of God the Father himself.*

The nobility still complained at court of having greatly hurt their fortunes in the war, and were continually soliciting compensations and rewards.

The Prince of Conti, lately created Grand Prior of France, said openly, that his horses had no hay. *I wonder,* said Marthal Belleisle, *they are not yet dead, for so long ago as when we were at Court, his Highness used to complain of the scarcity of forage.*

Lewis XV. did all he could to repair the fortunes of the great by posts, pensions, or governments; but he had a greater concern on his hands, which was to repair that of the nation.

I remember once he mildly said to some, who were unbecomingly urgent, that he would take care of them; *Have a little patience, I will provide for all as far as possible; but before I attend to private houses, the great family of the state must be provided for.* Another time he said, before the whole court, to a groupe of officers who talked much of their campaigns, and asked rewards: *Gentlemen, you have indeed done me great services in the war, but it is my desire you will do me still a greater in peace, which is to allow me first to ease those who have borne the whole weight of the war. You only lent a hand, but they bore the whole substance in it, &c. &c.*

Marthal

Marthal Belleisle was not overlooked; besides pensions, ranks, and honours heaped on him, all the bodies of the state, as it were, strove which should pay him the greatest marks of respect. The French Academy itself, on his leaving Paris to go to his government, composed a formal harangue, proving him the deliverer of France. A man of wit has called the members of the French academy *the most elegant liars in Europe*.

The new naval minister was busily searching for timber, seamen, and money, all over the provinces; but he looked for what was not to be found. On his return to Versailles appeared the following memorial by an unknown hand.

MEMORIAL on the MARINE.

“ FRANCE should not think of forming a navy gradually; such a plan is impracticable; for the English, who have an eye to the building of every ship we put on the stocks, and build additional ships in proportion, thereby always secure a superiority.

“ Thus Great Britain having, at present, a hundred ships of the line more than France, will consequently always exceed us by that number, were we to build three hundred ships of war within ten years.

“ We have often set about forming a navy, but our endeavours have always been defeated by the Britons. They have taken our ships in times of profound peace, and declared themselves our enemies by sea, before any war had commenced; their vigilance in preventing any thing which might affect the superiority of their navy, pays no regard to justice or good faith. A King of England would be immediately dethroned by his subjects, should he be for ad-

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“ hering to the treaties made with France. It
 “ is a tacit maxim with that nation, that a trea-
 “ ty is to fubfift only whilst France builds no
 fhips.

“ Time, which to all other diforders of govern-
 “ ment brings a remedy, here renders the difeafe
 “ incurable: building therefore is too flow a way;
 “ they know at London the very day when a-
 “ ny fhip of war is finifhed, and when to be
 “ launched.

“ This part of political ftrength muft be form-
 “ ed at once, and unknown to the admiralty of
 “ England. We fhould without delay apply to
 “ Holla nd, Denmark, the republic of Genoa, and
 “ Venice; and there, at once, purchafe a proper
 “ number of fhips; and if thofe ftates cannot ful-
 “ ly fupply us, there is Malta, Algiers, Tripoli,
 “ Conftantinople, &c. No matter from what na-
 “ tion we have fhips, or how they are built, if
 “ they will but hold men and guns.

“ Herein the ftricteft fecrecy muft be obferved,
 “ and the purchafes all punctually made at one
 “ and the fame appointed time; for fhould the
 “ Englifh get any intelligence of our defign,
 “ they would either by open force, or negotia-
 “ tion, prevent any fuch purchafe.

“ The want of feamen ftill remains; but here
 “ again we may fupply ourfelves by the fame me-
 “ thod. In time of peace, the Maritime powers
 “ have a great many more feamen than they want;
 “ it is only making good offers to thofe men;
 “ for the faylor, like the foldier, is for the beft
 “ bidder; his natural Prince is money, &c. &c.”

M. Rouillé, on reading this memorial, faid
*The author has forgot the main thing, money. He
 would have us purchafe a navy all at once, but does
 not provide wherewith to pay for it at once.*

A statesman has often observed, that most of the projects offered at the court of France are deficient in the very foundation. The schemer writes on in prosecution of his notions, till meeting a rock, when all his specious reasonings are wrecked.

M. de Belleisle told me that, in his closet, he had hundreds of memoirs for increasing the revenue and the national wealth, inscribed to him by the finest genius's of the kingdom; and that he might perhaps publish them with this title, *Accumulation of very fine, and very useless projects*. "Idle people," said he, often have thoughts which the business of placemen does not allow them to have:" and added, "that though memorial writers do not always make good their points, yet their strictures often put others on effectual improvements."

After the peace, the King had had sent the Duke de Mirepoix to London: on which Marshal Saxe said, that this nobleman, was perfectly fit for the embassy, having a very handsome leg, and dancing prettily, which might be of good consequence in a court which delighted in balls. The reasons which induced the King to this choice, have always been unknown to me. He never so much as mentioned it to me till it was done. A very intelligent man, whom the king had often employed in state affairs, said to me, at that time, "that M. de Mirepoix was neither supple nor complaisant enough for the English; neither was he sufficiently acquainted with the respective interests of the two nations: besides, continued he, he has a great defect for an ambassador, he is too honest, so that the English will impose on him." He might perhaps have added, with equal truth, that he had not a capacity equal to that employment. M. de Mirepoix had spent his youth in di-

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versions, and the latter part of his life in war; now the science of negotiation is not learnt either at the play-house or in the camp.

This minister's constant note was, that the court of St. James's was perfectly pleased with the peace, and all its thoughts turned on the enjoyment of it. He indeed wrote no more than he believed; for George the Second made him believe whatever he pleased.

The English minister at Paris was my Lord Albemarle, like ours, no great negociator. He had been taught his lesson by heart before he left London, and when at Versailles only repeated it. On any representation of the court of France being informed that the British court was making military preparations, he answered, that it was a mistake. This M. de Puyfieux was continually saying to him, and his answer was ever the same. English policy is much more easy than the French, having but one path; so that when once a British minister has got into it, he need but go straight on.

I saw this minister sometimes; he spoke our language better than common, and expressed himself even with energy. He loved expence, and lived nobleman-like; but he appeared to me to have one fault, though indeed it is common to all the English; his very prodigalities had something of parsimony in them. George the Second, who had a great kindness for him, supplied his expences; for tho' he lived so high, he was very poor: an Englishman, who had known him at London, speaking of his arrival at Paris, said, "My Lord will get a mistress there, run in debt, and die by some accident." The prophecy was fully accomplished: He lived with a girl, borrowed large sums, and died suddenly.

Lewis XV.

Lewis XV. was more constantly with me than ever; I had brought him to a custom of seeing me every day, and never spending less than five or six hours in my apartment: I accompanied him in all the journies, and had my apartments in all the royal seats. The more I became acquainted with his Majesty, the more I perceived the exceeding goodness of his heart.

My husband loudly complained of my living at Versailles, and wrote to me a very passionate letter, full of reproaches against me, and still more against the King; amidst other indiscreet terms, calling him tyrant. As I was reading this letter, the king came into my apartment; I immediately thrust it into my pocket; the emotion with which I received his Majesty, shewed me to be under some disorder; I was for concealing the cause, but on his repeated instances, I put my husband's letter into his hands. He read it through without the least sign of resentment; I assured him that I had no share in his temerity; and the better to convince him of it, desired that he would punish the writer severely. *No, Madam*, said he to me, with that air of goodness which is so natural to him, *your husband is unhappy, and should rather be pitied*. History does not afford a like passage of moderation in an injured King. My spouse, on being informed of it, left the kingdom to travel.

Though the peace had diffused quite through Europe, it caused violent agitations in the political bodies of France. The parliament of Paris, amidst its many remonstrances to Lewis XV. exhorted him in a very fine speech, to take off the *twentieth denier*. The deputies of that body expressed themselves in this manner.

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So many millions of men now in indigence, stand in need of immediate ease and relief; whereas, should they be still obliged to pay the twentieth denier, they will be quite unable to lift up their heads again, and repair their shattered fortune, and hence a general despondency.

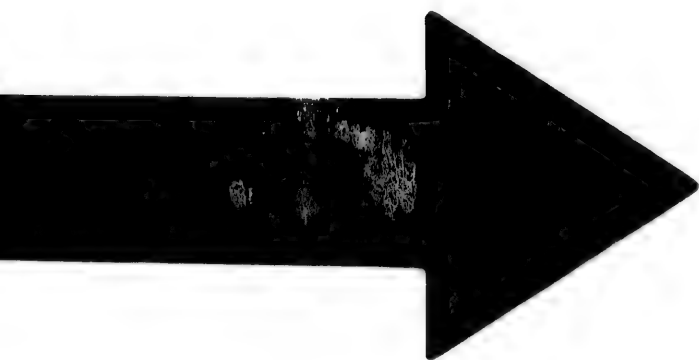
Whole families will be reduced to the most dreadful distress, and thus be afraid of leaving behind them a numerous issue, which would be a burden to them whilst living, and to whom they can transmit no other inheritance than their wretchedness.

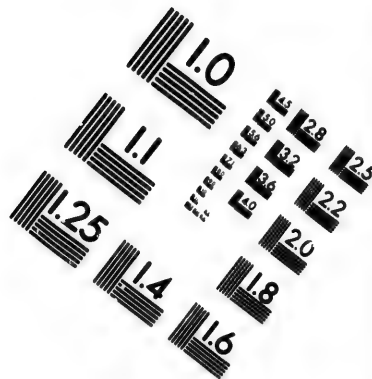
The number of children, who are the hope and support of the state, will be continually decreasing, the villages will be thinned, trade languish, and the culture of land in a great measure at a stand. The ruin of the farmers will necessarily be followed by that of the nobility, as their estates will suffer a very considerable diminution; and thus these people, and that brave nobility, whose valour is their sole and chief resource, will be involved in common ruin.

Count Saxe used to call the deputies of the parliament the great-chamber pedants. *They are for teaching the administration, says he, what it knows better than themselves. They are always harping on the distempers of the state, without any word of a remedy.* Once, as the first president was delivering a pathetic harangue before the King, proving the necessity of lessening the weight of the taxes, his Majesty cut him short with these words: *Mr. President, let but the parliament enable me to pay off the state debts, and defray the present expences of the Monarchy, and very readily will I abolish every tax, duty, and impost.*

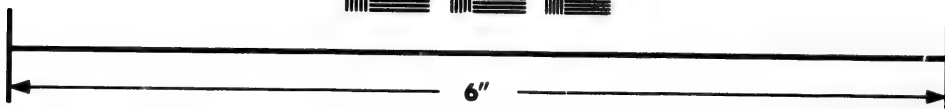
A man of wit, and who knows the French temper, used to say, that these useless representations were become necessary, as keeping up the people's spirits,







A resolution test chart featuring several groups of horizontal and vertical lines of varying thicknesses. Each group is accompanied by a numerical value indicating the resolution. The values include 1.0, 1.1, 1.25, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.0, 2.2, 2.5, 2.8, 3.2, 3.6, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.6, 6.3, 7.1, 8.0, 9.0, 10, 11.2, 12.5, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22.5, 25, 28, 32, 36, 40, 45, 50, 56, 63, 71, 80, 90, 100, 112, 125, 140, 160, 180, 200, 225, 250, 280, 320, 360, 400, 450, 500, 560, 630, 710, 800, 900, 1000, 1120, 1250, 1400, 1600, 1800, 2000, 2250, 2500, 2800, 3200, 3600, 4000, 4500, 5000, 5600, 6300, 7100, 8000, 9000, 10000.



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spirits, who, without a declared Protector, would think themselves for ever undone.

In Cardinal de Fleury's indolent ministry, and the subsequent wars, the government had not been able to take into consideration an abuse which manifestly tended to dispeople the monarchy. Religion, in all wise governments, a source of population, was thinning the human species. All France was mouldering away in convents: every town and village had numerous communities of girls, who made vows against having children. The following letter, which I received from a nun at Lyons, and communicated to the King, occasioned deliberations for reforming this abuse.

" MADAM,

" I was at first for writing to the pope, but, on farther reflection, I thought it would be full as well to apply to you. The point is this; when I was but seven years of age, my parents shut me up in the convent where I now am; and on my entering into my fifteenth year, two nuns signified to me an order to take the veil. I deferred complying for some time; for though quite a stranger to every thing but the house I was in, yet I suspected there must be another kind of world than the convent, and another state than that of a nun; but the sister of *Jesus's heart*, our mother, in order to fix my call, said to me, that all women who married were damned, because they lie with a man, and bore children: this set me a-crying most bitterly for my poor mother, as burning eternally in hell for having brought me into the world.

" I took the veil; but now that I am twenty years of age, and my constitution formed, I daily feel that I am not made for this state,

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" and think I want something; and that something, or I am much mistaken, is a husband.

" My talking continually of matrimony sets the community a-madding; the sister of the *Holy Ghost* tells me, that I am Jesus Christ's spouse; but, for my part, I feel myself much inclined to a second marriage with a man.

" On a young girl's coming into a convent, half a dozen wheedlers get about her, and never leave her till they have persuaded her to take the veil. Children are buried every day in monasteries, whilst their early age does not admit of any solid reflections on the vows they are drawn to make.

" Let me intreat you, Madam, to persuade the King to reform this abuse; it is a reformation which both religion and the prosperity of the state call for. The sacrificing so many victims to the avarice of parents, is a great loss of people to the state, and the kingdom of heaven is not the fuller. God requires voluntary sacrifices, and these are the fruit of reflection. It is surprising, that the laws, in settling the age for our sex's passing a civil contract, should forget the age for making vows; is reason less necessary for contracting with God, than with men? This I submit to yours and his Majesty's reflections: in the mean time, give me leave to be,

Madam,

Your most humble servant,

Sister JOSEPH."

The King thought that sister *Jesus's heart*, and sister *Holy Ghost*, had done wrong in drawing sister Joseph into the state of celibacy, as with such happy dispositions for marriage, she bid fair to have

have been a fruitful mother, and thus have benefited the state.

To suppress the aforesaid abuse, his Majesty issued an arret, forbidding all religious communities to admit a novice under twenty-four years of age and a day.

Other bodies, besides the parliament, continued setting forth to the court the impossibility the people were under of paying the *twentieth denier*. The states of Languedoc, with a peremptory kind of humility, represented that it was a load the province could by no means bear: the bishops, who usually employ their pens only in mandates, now wrote memorials on the public distress. The King ordered them not to meddle with money matters, and dissolved the assembly. The Duke de Richelieu, who was then at Montpellier, seconded the court's injunctions, and restrained the bishops pens as much as he could.

On being thus debarred from writing or meeting, they appointed an extraordinary deputation to lay before the King the condition of the kingdom. They were admitted to audience; they made their speech, returned home, and the *twentieth denier* was levied.

A minister of state used frequently to say, that these representations only increased the public charges. Were the provinces to pay at first, they would save themselves the no small expences of journies, correspondencies, and deputations, not to mention monopolies, which, on these occasions, are unavoidable.

The states of Bretagne likewise offered their difficulties; but all the effect of the representations of both was, that the court appointed two intendants of the finances to go and settle the levying of that tax on those refractory provinces.

These

These dictatorial proceedings of the states led the council to take their meetings into consideration; and, for some days, it was deliberated, whether they should not be totally laid aside. A counsellor of state, who was for the dissolution, drew up a memorial, which the King was pleased to communicate to me. This piece having never been printed, consequently not known to the public, I shall give it a place here.

“ The provincial states are of no use to France ;
 “ such assemblies might have been necessary in
 “ those times, when each province formed a separate kingdom ; but France being now united under one single government, can regulate its concerns sufficiently for itself, without any need of assemblies.

“ These provincial states only keep a division
 “ between the Prince and the subject, and are
 “ an obstacle to the expeditious levying and collecting of the imposts.

“ On his Majesty’s ordering a tax, however
 “ necessary it be, to defray the extraordinary
 “ expences, these states are sure to oppose it ;
 “ and immediately the court is deluged with remonstrances, and Versailles crowded with deputies : the general affairs must be delayed to
 “ issue fresh orders, and answer those sent the
 “ states, for their writings are rather orders than memorials.

“ This suspension of ordinances has other very
 “ bad effects ; the subjects, become accustomed
 “ not to obey, look on the wants of the state
 “ with the coldest indifference, and the public affairs go on heavily.

“ The members of these assemblies are like so
 “ many petty sovereigns ; their ascendancy over
 “ the minds of the people being without bounds.

“ An Archbishop of Narbonne, on his coming
 “ to

“ to Montpellier to open the states, is received
 “ with greater pomp than if Lewis XV. was to
 “ make his public entry.

“ In a monarchical state, where the whole au-
 “ thority should proceed only from one centre,
 “ it is dangerous to divide it by subordinate
 “ bodies.

“ These provincial states likewise affect morali-
 “ ty and religion; those of Languedoc consist of
 “ twenty-four bishops, or archbishops, who thus
 “ are absent from their dioceses three months out
 “ of the twelve; leaving in their stead their vi-
 “ cars, who have neither the like regard or zeal
 “ for their flock; and in this interval, a relaxa-
 “ tion in discipline and manners spreads every
 “ where.

“ The luxury of these assemblies is equally scan-
 “ dalous, every bishop there having his court and
 “ courtiers, and keeping open table. To day
 “ the bishop of Alaix has thirty covers on his
 “ table; and to-morrow my Lord of Nismes gives
 “ an entertainment, to which fifty persons of dis-
 “ tinction are invited; and so on.

“ The dissolution of the states will be attend-
 “ ed with no diminution in the finances. The
 “ free gift, which is the principal business of these
 “ assemblies, may be regulated like a common
 “ tax levied from year to year.”

The door of the provincial states being thus
 shut up, that of the assembly of the clergy im-
 mediately burst open: it was still the same object,
 but here discussed in great.

The business, as in the other assemblies, was the
twentieth denier, and the free gift: though this bo-
 dy, whenever called on by the King, pleads indig-
 nance, yet it knows that it is so far accounted
 rich, that all its studied speeches, on those occa-
 sions, cannot bring the public to think it poor.

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It endeavours therefore to compound with the King, and this time offered seven millions and a half to be exempted from the impost. I have heard a person, very well skilled in such affairs, say, that the clergy should not be allowed to compound for taxes; but that if any composition were to be admitted, it ought to be with the commonalty; which, as being most burthened, should be preferred before all the other bodies put together.

The affairs of the closet did not interrupt the court entertainments: the King hunted as usual, came to the plays, and every day supped with me in the little apartments. A tender and affectionate friendship now closely united us; desire was superseded by a calm inclination; the friend had succeeded the mistress; our hearts glowed with all the complacency arising from passions, without any of the disagreeable circumstances accompanying them. Several women had inspired Lewis XV. with love, but not one had he met with of a turn to make him feel the delights of friendship, which a generous soul will always prefer. The former is a commerce of pleasures, the gratification of which is almost ever followed by disgust: the second is a mild settled delight, resident in the mind, and if it does not minister any relish to the senses, is more lasting, lively, and refined. The King himself, at this time, assured me, that had he at first felt the delights of friendship, he should never have given himself up to those of love. All passion was now subsided in him; for this name is not to be given to those desultory gallantries, when the constitution only prompts to pleasure, without any concurrence of the heart.

This excellent Prince often said to me, that he was happy in having a real friend, to whom he could communicate his satisfactions and his troubles,

bles, for kings have theirs like other men; one of his greatest was the distresses of the people, and the impossibility of relieving them so speedily as he could have wished. He laid open to me the whole state of his mind, without any reserved secrets; all his heart was as well known to me as my own: it was an uneasiness for us to part, and we always met again with redoubled pleasure.

The King, as I said in the beginning of these Memoirs, had soon after my first appearance at court, made me Marchioness de Pompadour; and, that I might remain there with the greater decency, created me a *Lady of the palace*. This new place should have convinced all Europe, that there was no other commerce between his Majesty and me than what arose from esteem and friendship. But ill-nature pursues its point, regardless of all probabilities; and the state-malecontents picked out this passage of my life to mangle my reputation, &c.

To return to politics: business went on at Versailles with great dispatch, that the King might the sooner have the satisfaction he so passionately desired, of diminishing the imposts, and making his people enjoy the benefits of peace.

The marine was the principal point in view: M. Rouillé had hastily got together a little fleet, which, putting to sea, gave no small umbrage to the English. The British nation, with all its natural composure, is all in flames at the bare mention of a French navy: concerning this, I remember a jest at that time, *that the Britons could not close their eyes since France had an eye to its maritime concerns; and that were we to build a hundred ships of the line, not a soul in England would have any sleep.*

This navy, however, was but a beginning, and far short of what was intended. Yet could Eng-

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land ask France, "what was the destination of these ships?" M. de Puisieux gave my Lord Albemarle for answer, "that the King of France was not accountable to any power in Europe; that France was at peace with Great Britain; and that, consequently, the latter had nothing to apprehend from those ships."

The court of St. James's seemed satisfied; yet more closely watched our measures.

The government's attention was for some time taken up with books; the French, than whom perhaps no people in Europe are more restrained in their speeches, still affect to be the first in their thoughts. They print their notions on what comes uppermost, and the government is ever the first thing to fall under their pen. It is said that this licentiousness is owing to the above restraint; and I have heard that were not so many authors sent to the Bastille, Paris would not swarm with them as it does.

Very few of these seditious writings will bear reading, some of them are not so much as worth a *lettre de cachet*. To make the authors of mere trash the King's pensioners, is doing them too much honour.

Though the assembly of the clergy granted every thing required, it did not give every thing. On which the court sent a remonstrance to that body, which it answered with another remonstrance; but herein it so little observed the bounds of moderation, that the King dissolved the assembly, and confined the bishops to their dioceses. The next day a courtier said in the King's antechamber, "that they ought to be sent out of the kingdom, and priests put in their places:" this act of prerogative so humbled the prelates, that they offered to comply with all his Majesty's pleasure.

A nobleman said to the King, *Sir, if your Majesty will be no more troubled with the clergy's remonstrances, a sure way will be, to forbid the bishops coming to Paris; they will assent to the free gifts, or to any terms, only allow them to live there.*

However, this affair of the bishops disturbed the King; and one day he said to me, with some emotion, *They are perpetually vexing me. No sooner have I raised a poor ecclesiastic to a dignity of a hundred thousand livres a year, than he sets up for a leading man among the clergy, and votes against the free gift.* Sir, said I to him, *methinks there is a way of satisfying all. The crown should, on the death of the present possessor, appropriate to itself half of the revenue of the larger benefices. This would be no tax on any one. There is not a subject in France, designed for the church, who would not think himself under the highest obligations to your Majesty, in conferring on him an abbey, or a bishopric, with a revenue less, by half, than what the present possessor makes of it. I take upon me to bring about the composition; I make no doubt but that I shall find, in the kingdom, two hundred ecclesiastics, who will gladly set their hands to such an agreement.*

This diminution cannot be accounted unjust, your Majesty having the nomination to all the large benefices in the kingdom; and the giver is always master of his gifts. No complaint lies against a Prince, who, instead of a hundred and twenty thousand livres a year, which he can bestow on one of his subjects, gives him sixty thousand, &c. &c.

These few words, spoken only cursorily, were, a few days after, followed by an express memorial addressed to the Count de St. Florentine, and which he presented to the King.

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On the inequality of the taxes raised on the Clergy.

" IT is a received maxim in economics, that a geometrical equality in the levying of taxes lessens the weight of them. A burden borne by all the members of a body is always light.

" The uneasiness of the clergy concerning the free-gift, and other impositions, towards answering the necessities of the state, proceeds not so much from the impositions, as from the assessments. The dignitaries, who should pay the most, always pay the least, considering their incomes. The whole load falls on the poor parish priests, and other country incumbents, who have scarce a subsistence, and are more burthened as clergymen than as subjects.

" That the assembly of the bishops tax themselves, and the whole ecclesiastical body, is not a privilege belonging to the clergy, but a mere indulgence of the Kings of France, granted them with a proviso, that the assessments should be equitable, and that the inferior priests, who are the King's subjects no less than the greater ecclesiastics, should not be overcharged.

" The tax is rated by the income, which is an iniquitous assessment: a priest with only a hundred crowns a year, paying a crown, in effect, is rated much higher than a bishop, who, with a hundred thousand livres a year, pays a thousand: a yearly income of ninety-nine thousand livres being ever more or less superfluous; whereas he who has only a hundred crowns, by being deprived of one, must feel it in the very necessities of life.

" The inferior clergy are the King's subjects equally with the higher. To allow the bishops to tax priests, because they are subordinate to

" them

“ them, is a manifest error in government, the
 “ spiritual power having no claims in temporals,
 “ The imposition and assessments of taxes apper-
 “ tain to the crown, the mitre has nothing to do
 “ in it.

“ The whole body of the clergy should be tax-
 “ ed once for all, like the body of the laity: what
 “ tax the clergy can pay may be easily known;
 “ it is only taking an account of the several sums
 “ which the clergy has paid for these last twenty
 “ years; the twentieth part of the amount will
 “ be a fair yearly tax, as in twenty years an ex-
 “ act calculation may be made of the periodical
 “ wants of the state. In this interval, all the re-
 “ volutions may be reduced to a general sum.

“ It may be left to the clergy’s choice to pay
 “ the tax, without holding an assembly: this
 “ might be done by a tarif on the large and small
 “ dignities and benefices, or the tax might be le-
 “ vied by the King’s officers, as on the other
 “ subjects of the state.

“ The latter most comports with the dignity
 “ of the crown, and will likewise be more ad-
 “ vantageous. As the church is daily making ac-
 “ quisitions, and its general opulence is continu-
 “ ally increasing by donations, the clergy’s pay-
 “ ments should be raised in proportion to their
 “ aggrandizement.

“ This rise of the clergy’s tax would be no
 “ more than what takes place in the common im-
 “ posts. Artificers and trades-people pay more in
 “ proportion to their thriving, though this be by
 “ their own labour and industry.”

The American affairs, of which not a word had
 been heard since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle,
 now began to employ the court’s attention. The
 English complained, by their ambassador, my Lord
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Albemarle, that the French countenanced the Indians in their practices, and, underhand instigated them to molest their settlement in Nova Scotia. M. de Puisieux told the British minister, that the people of London were mistaken; "The court of France, said he, knows nothing of this supposed instigation; and, very probably, it exists only in the suspicious minds of the English."

However, the first sparks of that fire, which was to kindle the war afresh, already began to appear. Advice came from Canada, that the Indians were in motion; and though the cabinet of Versailles did not give direct orders to the French to oppose any such motion, neither did it tell them not to do so. This silence left the commanders to guess how they were to act; accordingly, they did not declare openly, but let second causes take their course.

A minister of a foreign court, formerly allied with France, and who, at that time, was frequently with M. de Puisieux, put into his hands a memorial on this head, which the King never saw, and it was not till long after that I read it.

"France, said that piece, is not yet in a condition to go to war again: things should be left to remain as they are, till she is able to cope with England; otherwise every thing will be ruined. The war by sea will give the turn to that by land: Great Britain will chuse this juncture for inducing the King of Prussia to declare against France, which thus will have two weighty wars on its hands, and only for a continent of no great importance, and which, at last, it will certainly lose, for the events of this war may be easily foreseen.

"The English navy is much superior to that of France; and the King of Prussia has two hundred thousand well disciplined men, ready, " at

“ at the first order, to march and make a powerful diversion in Germany; and, with the addition of those in England, will unquestionably turn the scale in the north. France is very well as it is, and should aim at nothing beyond keeping itself so, till a favourable opportunity shall enable it to do better.

“ Nothing in America calls for haste; you will always have time enough to make good your claims there: the Savages are your friends; they cannot endure the English. At present interfere no farther than fomenting this variance without promoting it; the time will come when you may make your own use of it: precipitancy spoils the most promising affairs; whereas time and patience bring every thing to bear.

“ Don’t imagine that your intrigues with the Americans blind Europe; the most clandestine practices of courts are always detected. Already, you are made accountable for the proceedings of the Canadians, though you appear not to concern yourselves about them. It is known to all Europe, that the North American savages act without any continued design, when not spirited up and directed. Every body knows those automata have no will of their own, saying and doing only just as they are bid to do.

“ Your navy is but in its infancy, scarce begun to be formed, so that a war only of two years would totally destroy it. Before engaging in a war, there is a sure way of knowing whether it should be undertaken, which is to weigh the advantages of the conquests with the disadvantages of the defeats.

“ Should you beat the English at sea, which is a circumstance out of all probability, you will retain North America, which you already have;

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" if beaten, and here the likelihood lies, you will
 " lose America, and perhaps all your other colo-
 " nies, for one conquest ever leads to another.

" The English, though beginning the war only
 " on account of Canada, will avail themselves of
 " their first victory to enlarge their views: and
 " the court of St. James's may afterwards strike
 " out such a scheme of destruction to France, as
 " perhaps, at present, it does not think of.

" A great disadvantage to France, is its having
 " no ally who can help it to recover its losses
 " against the English: the Spanish navy is in no
 " better condition than that of France; and the
 " Dutch rejoice in a war between the maritime
 " powers, were it only for the vast advantages
 " accruing to them from their neutrality. A con-
 " tinental power may retrieve the loss of a battle
 " by a subsequent victory; a more experienced
 " general, better disciplined troops, or more fa-
 " vourable circumstances, will give a turn to a
 " land-war; but the maritime concerns of France
 " are so situated, that a colony taken from it is
 " lost for ever; its ships, the only means of bring-
 " ing it again into the path of victory, being de-
 " stroyed."

This memorial, however approved by some po-
 liticians to whom I have since shewed it, had not
 the effect which might have been expected; ano-
 ther, afterwards presented to the same Minister,
 set the same object in a very different light.

It is said that the members of the English par-
 liament being generally of contrary opinions, long
 debates are very frequent in that assembly; and
 that these debates produce lights, from which the
 hearers receive great improvement, and become
 better qualified to serve their country. It is o-
 therwise in France: here the contrariety of opinions

only bewilders the understanding, and increases the confusion.

" The Canada affair, said the last writer, too nearly concerns the French monarchy, to be left as it is. Every minute we lose diminishes our power, and augments that of our enemies. The war ought to have been continued, had not several causes forced the government into a peace; but those causes no longer subsisting, we should take up arms again.

" The English will never keep within the limits assigned by the commissaries. They will, by skirmishes and secret practices, be ever endeavouring to come beyond those barriers: they must be prevented in time, their schemes must be destroyed at their very first appearance, otherwise it will be too late.

" The loss of Canada would be an inconceivable detriment to France. It is that to which England owes its being mistress of the sea, opening to it numberless branches of commerce, which it would never have known without being possessed of this continent.

" Though we have no great navy, yet have we shipping enough; a sea quarrel is not the point, but a land war. It is enough for us to send over some troops to Canada; the American affairs have no connection with those of our country. Should any disturbances happen in Germany, they will spring from a quite different cause; and if the King of Prussia declares against France, it will be for some particular views of his own, quite foreign to our colonies; he would declare himself, if we had no dispute with the Britons about Canada.

" It is not the first time of our having several wars on their hands, or, rather, it is impossible that we should have but one at a time.

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" Our concerns are so closely linked with the
 " other powers of Europe, that on our arming,
 " five or six princes cannot avoid declaring.

" The situation of affairs in Canada lays us
 " under a necessity of renewing the war: we can-
 " not continue in the state we now are in; the
 " capital effort of our politics should be to recover
 " the advantage which we lost by means of the
 " English.

" Amidst all the magnified superiority of the
 " British navy, its successes are not so certain as
 " supposed. Advantages in war depend on a great
 " number of unforeseen events. It is often ob-
 " served, that the certain expectation of a victory
 " has suddenly turned into the disappointment of
 " a defeat.

" England has not had time, since the peace,
 " to increase its marine; its naval force is, at this
 " day, just as it was at the end of the war. Be-
 " fore the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, we could
 " defend ourselves at sea, and still can: but if
 " we defer any longer, the time will be over;
 " for the British navy now is encreasing every day.
 " Our's will be so much inferior, as not to dare
 " to shew its face before them; and then we shall
 " be obliged to relinquish North America.

" Let us, without delay, begin the war again,
 " and then we shall drive the English out of Ca-
 " nada; whereas, by continuing the peace, they
 " will dispossess us. This is no time for parlying;
 " we must either give up that part of America to
 " England, or prepare to dispute it.

" The savage nations are our allies, they mor-
 " tally hate the English; and shall we delay avail-
 " ing ourselves of such a favourable disposition? A
 " people without any fixed laws, is naturally given
 " to change. The Canadians love war, and de-
 " spise such nations as live in peace: twenty years

“ inactivity would give them an ill opinion of the French; whereas, seeing us at war with a nation whom they hate, they will esteem us, and come into a closer alliance with us than before, &c.”

These memorials made no alteration in the general system; both sides continued to dissemble, and express a desire of cultivating the peace. England applied itself to increase its navy, and France sent orders to Brest and Rochfort, for building ships with the utmost dispatch.

Amidst the most earnest concern to redress the calamities of the state, no expedients could be found for so great and good an end. The people could not be relieved but by abolishing the taxes; and the expences of the state could not be answered but by new imposts: every branch of the government was embarrassed; so that the King often said to me, with a painful sense of such a situation, *I know not where to begin.*

The advantages of the encouragement of tillage, the improvement of arts, the increase of trade, the discharge of the national debt, were only in perspective; whereas the people stood in need of present relief. Observing that the public affairs greatly affected the King's temper and constitution, I contrasted them with diversions. I may say, the most gay and striking conceits of imagination; for pleasing the senses, were now exhibited at Versailles. In all the entertainments which I gave to the Monarch, there was little of my own; I had people of taste at Paris who furnished me with original materials, to which I only gave a few retouches.

Amidst all my inventions to draw the court from that mournful state which the perplexity of affairs shed on it, I perceived that the King was not so chearful as I could have desired. He had a cloudi-

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nefs in his looks, which were naturally fprightly; he was, likewise, more thoughtful than ufual. Alarmed at this lugubrious fcene, I took the liberty to ask his Majefty the caufe of fo unhappy an alteration. He vaguely answered, "that he was not fenfible of any alteration, and that my company ftill was his chief delight:" the revolution, however, was but too certain.

My enemies having mifcarried in their design of inducing the King to remove me from court, by political motives, fet religion to work; and no lefs a perfon than his Majefty's confeffor was put at the head of this cabal. He was a Jefuit with only morality for his instrument; but as that, with a Prince, feldom gets the better of pleafure, he contrived a way which ftruck my Monarch.

This reverend father employed one of the beft hands in Paris, in a picture representing the torments of hell. Several crowned heads feemed chained down in dreadful fufferings; there was no beholding their contortions without fluddering. This infernal mafter-piece he made a prefent of to Lewis XV. The King having viewed it for fome time with a frown, asked the meaning of the picture; the very thing the fon of Loyola wanted.

"Sire, faid he, the Prince you fee there fuffering eternal torments, was an ambitious Monarch, who facrificed his people to his vain delight in glory and power. He next to him, whom the devils are infulting, was an avaricious monarch, who laid up in his coffers immense treafures, squeezed from his oppreffed fubjects. This third wretch was an indolent fovereign, who minded nothing, and inftead of governing by himfelf, left every thing to his minifters, whose incapacity produced infinite mifchiefs. This fourth, whose fufferings exceed thofe of the others, his crime being greater, was a voracious
"luptuous

“luptuous King, openly keeping a concubine at
 “his court; and by this scandalous example had
 “filled his kingdom with debauchery, &c.”

The allegory was coarse, and becoming a monk, who, in the want of the means to attain his ends in this world, has recourse to things of the other life. Lewis XV. who saw into the drift of the picture, ordered the moralist to withdraw, but the impression remained.

This was not the first time that the churchmen had presumed on their office, and abused the King's goodness. A prelate had made him perform an ignominious act of penitence when sick at Metz.

I used fresh endeavours to relieve the King from this return of languor, and had in a great measure succeeded, when a family concern brought on a severe relapse.

The Dauphin was now in his twenty-second year, which, by the custom of France, intitled him to be intrusted with the affairs of the crown. This Prince had always shewn the most submissive deference to the King his father, but of late had put himself at the head of a party, most of whom were my enemies: they exposed me with all the venom of scurrility, and even brought in the King. Lewis XV. knew it, and this was what occasioned that inward conflict which gave him so much trouble. After communicating his situation to me, he said, *And what would you do, Madam, in such a case?*
 “Sire, answered I, I would admit his Royal High-
 “ness the Dauphin into every council, and allow
 “him all the honours due to his rank and birth.”
Well, said the King, *I will follow your advice;* and soon after the Dauphin saw himself sent for on every important deliberation.

M. de Machault, then at the head of the finances, left no stone unturned to put them in a good condition: he was urged on every side. M.

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Rouillé asked very large sums to form a navy; the prayers of annuities were perpetually at his elbow, and his apartment was never clear of those who had advanced money in the late war. He one day said to the King, in my hearing, *Sire, I know not how in the world, I shall answer your engagements; every body is making demands on me, and no body will give me any credit.*

Marshal Belleisle, to whom that laborious minister often used to pour forth his lamentations, told him, "Sir, I see but one way for you, which is to make the state a bankrupt. When a machine is out of order, the only remedy is to stop its motion, and to set it to rights again."

This advice, however, was not followed; and instead of stopping the machine of the finances, in order to set it to rights again, it remained in all its former disorder. I have somewhere, among my papers, a scheme for discharging the national debt, in which the author, who was accounted a very skilful economist, advanced, that, for the settlement of an invariable order in the finances, the state, every twenty-five years, should declare itself insolvent; and the creditors compound with the King, as with a private insolvent.

"France, said this paper, will not hear of making itself a bankrupt, but the way it takes to avoid it, is still more burthensome; for when the King's debts grow troublesome, does he not lay very onerous imposts on the people for the payment of them? Now this is a remedy worse than the disease, because the collecting of a tax, it is known, falls little short of doubling it. He extorts from one to pay another; a bankruptcy would ruin only a part of his subjects, whereas the means of payment impoverishes every body."

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I am not sufficiently acquainted with finances, to determine whether a wise King, in order to make his people easy, should begin by forfeiting the confidence of the wealthy part of his subjects. There are always some exceptionable things in these kinds of memorials. A person of a great genius has often told me, "that should all the fine projects, for making France the most opulent state in Europe, be carried into execution, it would perhaps make it the very poorest in the universe."

The particular favour with which Lewis XV. continued to honour me, drew great numbers to my apartment, so that I had every morning a full court: some persons of eminence appeared there purely to please the King; but the business of the multitude was interest. I had brought the latter to give me memorials, as otherwise, I could never have recollected so many different objects. It is impossible for those who live at a distance from court, to conceive the various classes of askers, and what a number of favours the throne has the pleasure of bestowing.

I have read, in an original paper, that Lewis XIV. allowed all his subjects, who had any demand to make at court, to apply directly to himself. Had such an indulgence been continued under the present reign, Lewis XV's whole life would have been taken up only in giving audiences. These memorials I had read to me, and afterwards talked them over to the King.

Besides those who asked favours, I was likewise teased with complainers, and indeed these were usually more in number than the others.

In so large a kingdom as France, it is scarce possible to prevent all abuses; some necessarily arise from the very constitution, and the maintenance of political

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political order. But one complaint so particularly struck me, that I thought it deserved to be laid before the king. This was the disregard of the children of officers dying in the service of their country.

A general officer, if no gentleman by birth, though, by his courage, he had secured the privileges both of the throne and nobility, leaving issue, they were excluded from nobility; and soon coming to intermix with the commonalty, no trace remained of the families which had performed the greatest services to the state: a hero's achievements died with him, his posterity were never the better for his exploits. This I mentioned to the king with a sensible concern, and some time after his Majesty, ever inclined to what was good and proper, issued an edict, ennobling military officers and their posterity. The different degrees of this nobility were specified in the edict, according to the different ranks of the officers.

No body in the kingdom apprehended that I had any share in this resolution; so that, unless my papers should be looked over, posterity will never know that this establishment, which gave so much satisfaction, was owing to me.

The courtiers were in as great a ferment as ever. They who found there was no pushing their fortune by my means, endeavoured to hurt me. Herein they often made use of indecent, and even insolent talk, besides the baseness of calumny. Several cabals had been formed, and these produced clashing and competitions, which affected the crown, as stirring up discontent in those who held the principal posts of the state.

The chancellor de Aguesseau pleaded his great age, and laid down business, as no longer able to bear the weight of it. A courtier, who was present when the King received his resignation, said

to him, *Certainly, Sire, M. de Aguesseau must be above a century old, for at a hundred years, one is still young enough to be chancellor of France.*

Several other place-men quitted, alledging that they could not live in a court where every thing was ruled by a woman: but this philosophy was of the latest; they never had any thoughts of retirement, till their endeavours to raise themselves to the very highest pitch of fortune, had miscarried; and some, in their voluntary exile, had set instruments to work, for making their appearance again on the theatre of power, which they had so lately quitted.

M. de Machault had the seals. This circulation of posts, diametrically opposite in practice, and requiring different talents, has been the subject of much complaint: but the fault lies in ambition. In France subaltern posts are looked on only as introductory to the more honourable and lucrative employments. On the vacancy of any great office, my apartment was crowded with competitors, who all had a genteel competency; but they wanted profitable posts, to make a show in the world.

The round of diversions which I had settled at Versailles, to recover the King from that lethargic heaviness which was growing constitutional, did not break in on general affairs. Lewis XV. daily devoted six hours to business. In the morning he employed himself about the foreign and domestic affairs.

The death of Marshal count Saxe now cast a damp on the festivity of the court. I remember a man of wit, being in my apartment when the news came, said to me, *Now, Madam, we shall soon have a war, for he was the only one of all his Majesty's generals whom the King of Prussia in the least feared.*

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The frequent conferences between Lewis XV. and this hero gave me an opportunity of studying his temper; for there is a pleasure in knowing great men; and his mind was of a singular cast: all his private behaviour favoured of the common man, great only in the day of action; then his soul if I may be allowed the expression, assumed a new form; it became piercing, noble, and exalted: a new light beaming on his mind, he had an instantaneous perception of every thing. His imagination had nothing to do, the military genius which inspired him at those times was all-sufficient; yet after the battle, all this flame and magnanimity sunk again into littleness and vulgarity, nothing great remained in him but the fame of his actions.

In private life, he addicted himself to sensuality in its most brutish excesses; he was a stranger to that refined love which distinguishes noble from vulgar souls, delighting in the company of women only for debauchery; for all his mistresses were common prostitutes. Whilst he was disturbing all Europe by his victories, the gallantries of La Favart, an actress, allowed him no ease.

They who were often with him say, that he had scarce any tincture of learning; war was all he knew; and that he knew without learning it. Some politicians have thought, that his death wrought a change in the systems of Europe, and particularly, that the king of Prussia would never have renewed the war, had Maurice been living: it is certain that one man may change the whole scene of our political world.

I have read, in original memoirs of Lewis XIV. of surprising revolutions, brought about only by the ascendancy of one mortal. Count Saxe had long laboured with indefatigable ardour in pursuit of a repose which he never enjoyed; for scarce had he

he seen himself in that summit of grandeur to which his military talents had raised him, than death laid him in the grave. Besides the royal feat given him by the King, in reward of his services, with suitable incomes, he was invested with the highest dignities and honours.

This general left behind him an incontestable reputation; his very enemies allow him to have been a consummate warrior; but if he did a great deal for France, France still did more for him; he never wanted for any thing. The King's commissaries constantly furnished him with plenty of all necessaries; he had large armies, and fought in a country which has almost ever been the theatre of French victories, and where the glory of the French name has shone in its greatest lustre. Farther, Maurice had with him the King's best troops, impatiently longing to signalize themselves. I heard one of the trade, and reckoned to understand it thoroughly, say, that to be a hero, a man should have passed through all the military paths leading to glory; whereas Maurice, in the service of France, trod only one, and that smoothed for him; he was never put to those trials where a commander, being forced to exert all his abilities, approves himself a general.

I have read in the manuscript memoirs of Lewis XV. that the great Conde's enemies put the Queen-mother on sending him into Catalonia only with a small body of troops, and those of the very worst. Conde, who knew his enemies views, wrote thus to his friend Gourville: *I have been sent here to attack the gods and men, with only shadows to fight them. I shall miscarry; how can it be otherwise, when the means of beating the enemy have been all taken away from me?* Yet this hero, under the disadvantages both of numbers and the climate, baffled all the efforts of Spain.

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The death of Marshal Saxe occasioned a revolution in the minds of the military courtiers. They who hitherto had hid themselves behind his merit, made their appearance: all put in for this hero's post, and not one of them was qualified for it.

The King, on the first notice of count Maurice's death, said, *I am now without any general, I have only some captains remaining.* Lowendahl, however, was still living; but it is said, the genius of those two men was formed to be together, and that the heroic virtues of the latter derived their splendor from the superior qualities of the other. A courtier said, on this head, *Lowendahl's exploits are over; his counsellor is dead.*

Whilst Versailles was full of this event, the Pope's nuncio came to acquaint Lewis XV. that the King of Prussia had granted the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion at Berlin; and that even the religious were allowed to settle, and wear the habit of their respective orders. A courtier hereupon said to the King, *Sire, that Prince is for having a little of every thing. Once nothing would go down with him but soldiers, now he must have some monks.* Another courtier replied, *Since he begins to fancy gowns, let me advise your Majesty to make him a present of all the Jesuits in France.* A third added, *That article should be kept for the next treaty of peace, and let six Loyolites be exchanged for one soldier.* The systematical people, however, attributed this indulgence to policy; for when a Prince is looked on to be full of schemes and designs, every step of his is nicely canvassed, and various constructions put on it. Some said that the King of Prussia thereby intended to ingratiate himself with the court of Rome, as, by its intrigues with weak and superstitious princes, it can amply make up its want of temporal strength. Some thought

thought it to arise from a new system of population, to draw Catholics thither from other parts; but the monks and priests of our faith do not increase population, &c. &c.

For my part, I attributed it to the humour for new foundations, which prevails with all the princes of our days. On examining the constitution of the Prussian government, which is an absolute monarchy, the plurality of religions, will by no means appear suitable to it; at least I have heard from a very intelligent person, that it is only in republics where a freedom of religion can be properly allowed.

For some time the King had been more cheerful than usual: after so many vexations and fatigues, he now began to breathe a little; he was at leisure to be often with me, and to hunt as much as he could. Never was a Prince so fond of this exercise. His eagerness in it often fatigued him beyond all bounds. I one day represented to him, that he made a toil of that pleasure, and that it would be better for him to be more moderate in it; that excess in any thing was hurtful; but he answered, that the more he hunted, the better he found himself. This is a new medical system; the court-physicians, who are all for motion and agitation, will have kings to spend half their life on horse-back.

But a great satisfaction, which that 1750 justly beloved Prince now felt, was the having given some relief to his burthened subjects. He had remitted three millions of the land-tax, abolished the hundredth denier, and the pence per livre levied on this impost. Though this was no great good, it presaged the end of a great evil.

At the same time, Lewis XV. ordered an inquiry into the nature of the taxes; of all imposts

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the land-tax was found to be the moſt burthenſome, as not proportioned to the real income. The old tax was ſtill levied, without conſidering any decays, or damages of eſtates and lands; many a market-town, or village, which had formerly been able to pay large ſums, was now no longer ſo; yet the ſame duty was required.

The government deliberated on ways for abolishing ſuch an unequal tax, and ſubſtitute another of a more proportionate aſſeſſment. This had, for ſome time paſt, been often propoſed, but always rejected. It was now again taken into conſideration, and after the moſt minute diſcuſſions, it was found beſt to leave things as they were, leſt worſe inconveniencies might enſue. It is ſaid, there are abuſes in government, the reformation of which would do more harm than the very abuſe itſelf. This was the opinion of the miniſters, and of the King himſelf; but it was not mine, having always thought that no good can come from evil. We had often little debates about government, for Lewis XV. as I have ſaid in the beginning of theſe Memoirs, has a great deal of wit and good-ſenſe, and eſpecially a very ready penetration. “ You, Madam, would he ſay to me, look on the political community as a private family, whereas it is to be conſidered as an univerſal ſociety, conſiſting of different bodies, the conjunction of which conſtitutes the ſtate. Amidſt this immenſity of objects, conducted by men of oppoſite views and intereſts; the ſecurity and well-being of the ſtate is upheld by thoſe very things which ſeem to undermine it. In a private family, there is only one ſingle plan of adminiſtration, the abuſes are few, eaſily animadverted on, and the reformation of them reſtores that unity of government which is the perfection of ſuch a ſociety: but in the general
“ community,

“ community, good is to be continually ballan-
 “ ced by evil, and in this equi-poize lies the po-
 “ litical order of the state.

“ If so, Sir, said I to him, how is it that those
 “ states, where the most abuses are reformed,
 “ are the best governed. The Muscovites, of all
 “ the European nations, were the least civilized,
 “ and consequently the most unhappy, till Peter
 “ the Great appeared, who vigorously suppress-
 “ ing abuses of all kinds, from his reformation
 “ has sprung a powerful nation, a rich and happy
 “ people.

“ Brandenburg had neither force nor power;
 “ the art of war was scarce known there; it lay
 “ in obscurity; it was of no account among the
 “ states of Europe; and this contemptible condi-
 “ tion was, in a great measure, owing to many
 “ abuses which its sovereigns either could not or
 “ would not reform. But in our times, one of
 “ its sovereigns has suppressed abuses, introduced
 “ political order and military discipline; and this
 “ reformation has enabled him to act a capital
 “ part on the theatre of Europe.

“ England is said once to have been nothing,
 “ till the parliament took in hand to form its
 “ power. It has since been continually retouch-
 “ ing the political system, and correcting a num-
 “ ber of abuses, which, for several centuries,
 “ hindered this state from emerging into power
 “ and reputation; and now its *bills* shew the con-
 “ tinued system of its greatness.

“ France, Sir, is a home instance of this. Lewis
 “ XIII. a weak Prince, and wholly governed by
 “ his ministers, concerned not himself about a-
 “ buses; he left the state as he found it, full of
 “ mismanagement and disorder. Your great grand-
 “ father changed the whole, and by the refor-

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"mation he brought about in all the branches of government, imparted as it were, a new genius to his people.

"France, during the first years of Lewis XIV. rose to a pitch of glory and grandeur beyond any thing ever seen in the Roman empire."

Here the King smiled, and very obligingly said to me, "I own, Madam, I did not think you had been so well acquainted with these points; it gives me infinite pleasure that, besides the graces of wit and vivacity, you are possessed of that knowledge which enlarges and revives the judgment. The world is often deceived in those matters, continued the King, and the greatness of Princes is almost ever confounded with the happiness of the people. A Sovereign may make reformatations in his kingdom, and his subjects be never the better for them; he is the only gainer by the change.

"Peter I. made considerable alterations in Muscovy, but did not thereby make the Russians a whit the happier. The revolution was felt only by the state. The Monarch became great and powerful, but the people still continued little and mean; for to have brought them from the abject state in which they then were, required the suppression of a multitude of civil abuses and vices, which continued after his time, and still subsist. The present Muscovites are sordid slaves, with all the ignorance and superstition of their fore-fathers, who lived before the reign of that great reformer Peter. And if the empire, once without a soldier, has now a numerous army; yet this adventitious power depends on the chance of a battle or two.

"Prussia, with all the reformatations made there does not find itself more happy. The people, amidst

“ amidst their Monarch’s victories, groan under
 “ the weight of the military burden laid on them;
 “ and its power depends on the existence of one
 “ single man. When Frederick comes to die, its
 “ political state dies with him.

“ It is a question, continued the King, much
 “ debated whether the English are more power-
 “ ful, and are more happy, than they were be-
 “ fore those volumes of reforming *bills* were in be-
 “ ing: this is a point the nation itself is not agreed
 “ on. There is a party in England which as-
 “ firms that the government is intirely ruined,
 “ and the political state indebted beyond what it is
 “ able to pay; and that it cannot answer its ne-
 “ cessities. Yet I am inclined to think that Eng-
 “ land is increased in strength; but this is rather
 “ owing to the inadvertency of other powers than
 “ to any reformatations of its own, which would
 “ have profited very little, had its neighbours fol-
 “ lowed its example.

“ As to the instance of our own country, I have
 “ wished that France had been in the same situ-
 “ ation, at my accession to the throne, that Lewis
 “ XIII. left it in. His successor, what with re-
 “ formations, splendor, and glory, reduced it so
 “ low, that it will be ages before it is thoroughly
 “ recovered.

“ Our political discussions were always mixed
 “ with politeness and compliments; never did a
 “ word come from Lewis XV’s mouth which had
 “ any thing of asperity in it, &c.

“ England still kept a watchful eye on the
 “ French navy; and, on our side, the increase of
 “ it was the ministry’s chief object. All M. Rou-
 “ ille’s demands of money were immediately an-
 “ swered, and he lost no time: ships were daily
 “ launched.

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VOL. I.

France and England were, indeed, at peace; but acted with the same mistrust as if at open war; the public expences rose high; yet the French, who are continually complaining, did not in the least murmur, so convinced was every one of the absolute necessity of having a navy capable of facing that of Great Britain.

In the mean time, all the ministers continued declaring themselves against me; the very persons who, through my interest with his Majesty, had been promoted to the object of their wishes, were the most forward in promoting my disgrace. Since my living at Versailles, I have often lamented this flagitiousness, which is, as it were, innate in the human mind. No sooner is a man invested with honour and power, than he studies to cut off the hand which raised him. It is not my intention to enter into all the arts and practices of my enemies; there would be no end of the allusions, tales, stories and songs, industriously disseminated over the kingdom to expose me. However, I was always exactly informed of what was said about me; but of some of my revilers I took no notice; others I threatened to complain of to the King. All, however, continued their abuses: I was a thousand times for leaving the court, had I not apprehended that the King being now habituated to see me daily, it might shorten his valuable life.

The Count de Argenson, secretary at war, did not love me, saying, "That I gave too many military posts; that he had not so much as a lieutenancy of foot at his disposal." Now this accusation was so far from being true, that I never recommended any person to his Majesty, without previously consulting that Minister. It was purely my favour which rankled him; he wanted to

set the King against me, that he might ingross the whole royal favour to himself.

Peace being the season for public foundations, a plan of a military school, for instructing the French nobility in the art of war, was laid before his Majesty in the year 1751. *The kingdom, said the author, was full of gentlemen who, unable, conveniently, to put themselves under masters, led an inactive life in the country, instead of spending it in the service of the state.*

In this school five hundred gentlemen were to be boarded and educated: the King was pleased to shew me the plan, and asked my thought on it.

“ Sir, said I, nothing can be better ; I could only wish it more comprehensive. This school will not furnish officers enough for France, which is so frequently at war. I have heard Marshal Saxe say, That in an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men, there was seldom less than twenty thousand officers ; so that only one fortieth of that number can be had from the military-school, which to me appears no small defect in a foundation, of itself, so excellent.”

A courtier, on reading the plan for this school, jocularly said, *This martial convent will afford very good military monks.*

The great objection made against it, by some discreet persons, was the exorbitant expence of it, at a time when every resource of the state had been drained to defray the extraordinary demands of the war. The expence, indeed, was not to be furnished from the royal treasury ; but from whatever fund sums are taken on such occasions, they are still burthensome, as tending to keep the people poor.

It was likewise said, that France stood more in need

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need of a naval than a military-school; that the King might find a hundred land-officers in his dominions, for one sea officer; that the French gentry were naturally fond of signalizing itself in armies, and had as great an aversion to fleets; but the plan had been resolved on.

The powers of Europe were at peace, when religious disputes, breaking out, disturbed France in its political and domestic quiet.

Two parties, who, for forty years past, had been contending for the superiority, now returned to the charge. Being quite ignorant of the subject of their quarrels, I had it explained to me. Should ever these Memoirs be made public, the reader will be so kind as to excuse my tiring him with the following detail. Never had this evil found a place in these annals, had it not concerned the King; but his interesting himself in this dispute, and greatly so, is alone a sufficient motive for my giving some account of it.

A native of Spain, named Molina, in the fullness of his knowledge, took it into his head to decide, and vindicate, how God acts on mortals, and in what manner mortals withstand God. The Jesuits, who know every thing, and pronounce sentence on every thing, had, till then, been totally unacquainted with the mechanism of the metaphysical intercourse between the Creator and creature; and, for their better information, Molina invented many barbarous words, or scholastic terms, with innumerable distinctions and divisions.

To proceed in this dispute with some order, and wrangle theologically, he distinguished between *preventive* and *co-operating* grace: one of these forces could do any thing, and the other little or nothing; but this not being sufficient for understanding what he himself did not understand, he

farther invented the *mediate knowledge* and *congruism*.

According to him, God held a council of state in Heaven, before which all men were summoned and interrogated, how they will act after receiving his grace; and, according to the free use which he saw they were to make of it, he decreed within himself, either to admit them into Paradise, or cast them down into hell.

Unluckily for the Christian world, this Molina was a Jesuit; an order little beloved by the others; the Dominicans, especially, raised an outcry against his congruism.

These things being transacted in Spain, the Inquisition took cognizance of the altercation; and had they burned Molina, and a few Dominicans there would have been an end of the matter, and for once, this tribunal had done a good piece of service to Christendom. *Concomitant concurrence* and *co-operating grace* had a trial at Rome; but the more the parties disputed, the less understood they one another. A monk offered his mediation; but this mediator was less intelligible than the controversies.

The difficulty was not so much the putting an end to the dispute, as to know what the dispute was about. Neither party understood themselves or the other, and, in the mean time, with their free-will, mediate knowledge, complement of active virtue, &c. they ran themselves more and more into darkness.

The bickerings, at length, ceased for want of disputants, there being times when monks sacrifice every thing to indolence. All remained quiet till one Cornelius Jansenius renewed the contest; yet, instead of inventing any thing, he only disputed behind a huge book, the author of which was named Baius. The Jesuits solicited the Po-

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to condemn Cornelius, and by the dexterity of their agents at Rome, carried their point there; but in other parts of Europe, it went against them. The universities, the parliaments, and chiefly the women, profound judges of such things, sided with Jansenius.

A paper war commenced with great acrimony; congruism, by dint of bulky volumes, worsted predestination in some pitched battles: yet the war went on undecided; both parties being now grown powerful, and fighting merely for the honour of victory.

Till then, only private persons had appeared in the field; but now universities declaring themselves, the action became general. No accommodation was so much as talked of, there being no body, or society, in the state, of a power sufficient to compel the two parties to accept of its mediation.

In the mean time, the Molinist bishops drew up a condemnation of Jansenius's five articles, though, in the opinion of his party, they were no more than what St. Augustine himself had advanced. Several communities of men signed the condemnation; but the nuns, who have nothing to do, and eagerly catch at every opportunity which may bring them into the world again, protested against subscribing; and those of Port Royal distinguished themselves by their firmness or obstinacy.

I do not wonder that they refused subscribing, but am surprised that their subscription should have been required; it was shewing them a regard, on this affair, which ought not to have been shewn them: on their pertinacious refusal, they were forcibly removed, and dispersed into other convents; whereas the real punishment would

have been to have kept them always in the same spot.

The Popes, likewise, from time to time, issued new formularies, which gave an air of greater moment to the quarrel; but they had done much better to have left it to itself, and then Molina and Jansenius would soon have sunk into oblivion; but the court of Rome is ever for being absolute.

In the midst of this war, however, a truce was brought about. Clement IX. a man of good sense and prudence, drew up a set of articles of capitulation, had them signed by the Jansenists, and thus brought about a peace; but, unhappily, when religion is in the case, war soon kindles again.

A father of the oratory, named Quesnel, is said, this time, to have been the instrument of discord. He wrote a book which, after being applauded throughout all Europe, France censured. It was not very easy to point out wherein this book was to be found fault with; but religious cabals were then in fashion. The Molinist party, in the mean time, carried it with a high hand, having the king's ear.

The confessor to Lewis XIV. was a Jesuit, who formed parties both at court and in town, against the Jansenists, who keenly revenged themselves with their pens; thus, though there was a prevailing party, the war still continued.

Hitherto no manifestos had passed between the Molinists and the Jansenists, both parties, in the heat of their zeal, having taken up arms without any declaration of war. Lewis XIV. procured from Rome a bull, whereby a fire was kindled, which has not since been quenched. The Pope, the bishops, the King, the religious orders, in short, people of all ranks gradually engaged in the quarrel, to the great disturbance of the nation and

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families; all plotting and caballing one against the other.

The principal object of public hatred was father Le Tellier, who over-ruled the King's conscience: this was a hot and ambitious man, who wanted to revenge some personal offences given him by the Jansenists, and, in pursuit of his drift, alarmed both the King's conscience and the kingdom.

Lewis XIV. towards the decline of his life, was grown weak and irresolute, and often harrassed with terrible fears of the devil. The hard hearted Jesuit had possessed him with a persuasion, that the affair of the Molinists was the cause of God. His resentment chiefly aimed at the cardinal de Noailles, and he had the confidence to move his penitent to depose him judicially. The death of this Prince brought on a suspension of this bustle, which was called the constitution.

The Duke of Orleans, who loved neither popes nor bishops, and despised bulls, in order to rid himself both of the Molinists and Jansenists, appointed commissioners for hearing their broils, separately from the other affairs of the monarchy; with an intent to deprive them of their public importance: but the wisdom of this precaution was frustrated; those people still were for figuring in the state. They appealed to a national council, which was nothing less than throwing off the yoke of the administration, to erect another independent of it. The regent banished and exiled both bishops and priests; but this remedy only inflamed the disease, hardening both parties in their obstinacy. The Jansenists and Molinists then formed themselves into two factions, under the names of *acceptants* and *recusants*. The *Acceptants* called the *Recusants* heretics, and the *Recusants* gave the appellation of schismatics to the *Acceptants*.

The frenzy for efficacious grace was bursting out with greater violence than ever, when the Mississippi scheme was set on foot; then avarice did what neither the Pope nor King could: all the people's thoughts now ran only on getting money. The names of Jansenists and Molinists were almost forgotten, though to this nothing perhaps contributed more than the contempt and ridicule which the Duke of Orleans put on this controversy, calling it a trifle; whereas Lewis XIV. had been made to lay it to heart, as an affair of the greatest concern.

The subsequent wars under Lewis XV. made the Jansenists and Molinists to be still farther forgotten, though not without some occasional skirmishes on predestination; but as there was no general action, they were not much heeded.

The dispute, in the mean time, was not totally extinguished, or rather it was a fire lurking under embers. In 1750, the Molinists renewed hostilities, refusing the Sacraments to sick persons of the contrary party, under pretence of their not having confessional certificates.

The parliament intervened, and punished the delinquents; by which the two parties regained the consideration, which they had lost by the Duke of Orleans's measures. This rupture gave rise to a new discussion, whether the parliament could intermeddle with this affair, or had any right to banish, or inflict punishments on priests, who, in refusing to administer the sacraments, only conformed to the injunctions of their bishops.

The Jansenists said that the civil magistrate has a power legally superior even to that of the church, the order of a state depending on such subordination; and they farther added, that the administration of the Sacraments is the capital branch of the polity exercised by the civil magistrate.

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The answer of the Molinists was, that in spirituals they acknowledged no other superiority than that of the Pope and his bishops; that civil affairs were the parliament's province, and all it ought to concern itself in; but that the kingdom of heaven had been committed to pastors, and not lawyers.

The subjects, in the mean time, died without the sacraments; the priests indeed were punished, yet the evil remained, and this affair gave the King much uneasiness: the Bourbons indeed have always laid to heart religious disturbances: the court gave itself more concern about these confessional certificates, than ever it had shewn in the most important political transactions. It often became necessary to put a violence on priests, and make use of soldiers to compel them to administer. Never, from the birth of Christ, had such a thing been seen, as having recourse to the bayonet for the administration of the most sacred mystery. It was indeed a horrid scandal; but to see subjects, at the point of death, begging for the communion, and refused, was something still more shocking.

The King, one day, said to me, "These people give me a great deal of uneasiness; if they go on, I shall be obliged to turn all the priests out of their livings, and have their functions performed by Capuchin-friars, who are intirely as I would have them, &c." *

The court's attention now came to be taken up with an affair of still greater importance than the constitution itself; the election of a King of the Romans. The house of Austria, fond of its greatness, is always providing for the future security of it. As Charles VI. had engaged the Sovereigns of Europe to make themselves the instruments of his ambition, even after his decease; Maria Theresa,

in her life-time, took measures for fixing the Imperial throne in her family.

It was on a Prince who might be looked on as a Lorrainer, that she was conferring the title of presumptive heir; for Charles VI. dying without male-issue, the house of Austria had ended in him. The circles of the empire accounted this measure a greater act of despotism than that of the late emperor; as hereby the empire, from an elective constitution, not only became hereditary, but even escheated to a foreign family: loud complaints were made, and that was all. It is now about a century, that the petty princes in Germany have not been able to shew their resentment against the house of Austria, any farther than by complaints and murmurs.

Maria Theresa, knowing how far her forces were superior to any which the Northern Princes could oppose to her designs, communicated her plan to the other courts of Europe, and to France one of the first. The King shewed me the Austrian ambassador's reasons, digested into writing by M. de Puisieux, after a conference with that minister. The artful turn given to them by ambition, makes them worthy of being preserved.

" The calamities still recent, said that Ambassador, which the vacancy of the Imperial throne, on the demise of Charles VI. brought on Europe, should move Christian Princes to prevent the like. The Emperor now reigning is in full health, and it may be presumed, that God will grant him length of days: but should one of those many accidents to which human nature is liable, disappoint the public hopes, and shorten his valuable life, Christendom would be plunged in the same abysses, as on the decease of the last Emperor. It is therefore the concern of all the European powers to prevent a war, that

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" scourge which throws every thing into confusion,
 " lays waste whole nations, and thins mankind.
 " The calamities caused by the late vacancy of
 " the empire are not likely to be brought to a
 " speedy end, and what will it be should new dis-
 " turbances be accumulated on the former ?

" Too many precautions cannot be taken against
 " evils, which, when once happened, cannot be
 " averted, or the issue of them determined.

" By the election of a King of the Romans, the
 " views of Princes who may have formed designs,
 " are prevented; and the coronation once over,
 " will suppress all cabals and intrigues about being
 " head of the empire. When a sceptre is vacant,
 " a great stir is made after it; but when once pos-
 " sessed, it is no longer thought of.

" Archduke Joseph, indeed, should the Em-
 " peror die, is not of age to govern his dominions;
 " but the evils of minority cannot be compared to
 " those which the want of a head to the empire
 " would occasion.

" Not that the Queen of Hungary is in the
 " least apprehensive of her heirs being deprived of
 " a throne, the legal appenage of her family; her
 " leading motive in this settlement is to prevent
 " the needless effusion of blood.

" On the death of Charles VI. it was seen that
 " all Europe cannot make an Emperor. The
 " Elector of Bavaria, after being placed on that
 " throne by foreign armies, was always in a tot-
 " tering condition; so that had not death deprived
 " him of the crown, he would have been obliged
 " to resign it, &c."

I have observed that ambassadors, in cases of
 personal interest, generally overlook the regard due
 to Princes by the law of nations. Here the Vienna
 minister would have France subvert the very founda-
 tions

scourge

dations of the Imperial constitution, and make that crown hereditary, which had always been elective. He surely forgot that the house of Bourbon, as I have been told, had, at the treaty of Westphalia, made itself a guarantee of the liberties and privileges of the empire. His court seemed not to recollect that the election of a King of the Romans depended on the consent of the electors, in a diet held expressly for such election.

The King, on reading this Memoir, asked M. de Puisieux what he thought of the business. *Sir,* answered the Minister, *you must consent to everything; it is no longer worth France's while to meddle with the affairs of Germany; at present the King of Prussia is able to keep up the balance in the North, and hinder the house of Austria from lording it over yours, so that all we have to do now, is to look on.* The council, however, was of a different opinion; but it is not the first time that one man has been wiser than an assembly.

The court of Vienna was likewise busy in bringing the other courts of Europe to countenance this election. That of England represented to the Marquis de Mirepoix, that it was the interest of France to close with the making a King of the Romans doubtless, because it was theirs. This court afterwards went farther, and George the Second affirmed, that the election of a King of the Romans did not depend on the Electoral college; that is, that the dignity of presumptive heir to the empire might be conferred without any deliberation of the electors, which was making the Imperial crown absolutely hereditary.

I remember all the memoirs of that time agree in the Archduke's being very young, but they all likewise added, that an Emperor under age was better than a vacancy of the throne, which amounts to an approbation of a regular succession.

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A politician of our court, with whom I was talking of this election, told me, that there was an article in the treaty of Westphalia, which formally settled this affair. It is there expressly said, *That no election of a King of the Romans shall be entered on, unless the reigning emperor be out of the empire, and with an intent to be absent a long time, or for ever; or that age should render him incapable of government; or there should manifestly appear some great necessity on which the safety of the empire depended.* But treaties are never followed, and no more was said of this, than if it had never existed.

The King of Prussia alone stood up in defence of the Electoral-college; but he had his reasons for this specious conduct. The election of a King of the Romans secured the empire to the house of Austria; and it has been believed by many, that he himself looked that way. There is indeed no ambition, of which a Prince, so powerful in war as to subdue several nations, is not susceptible.

I return to Versailles, from whence the affair of the King of the Romans has carried me too far. Lewis XV. as I have said elsewhere, was now a little relieved from the load of business imposed on him by the war; peace allowed him a leisure, which was the very felicity of my life. Amidst the confusion of sieges and battles, he had no settled residence. Flanders had several times deprived me of him; but the treaty of peace intirely restored him to me, and his confidence in me daily increased; so that he even imparted to me his uneasiness, for kings have their troubles both as men and as Princes.

Lewis XV. would often lament that he had no friends, and had a thousand times wished to have been a private person, for the sake of cordial friendship and sympathy, to the effects of which Kings are always strangers.

“ No

“ No sooner have I distinguished a subject by
 “ some considerable post, but a hundred others,
 “ jealous of the favour, grow out of humour
 “ with me; and, at the same time, I do not get
 “ the love of him on whom I have conferred the
 “ benefit; he complains that I have not done
 “ enough for him, and they, for my having done
 “ nothing for them. All love favour, and care
 “ little for the King. I see about me only sordid
 “ souls, slaves to pride and ostentation, acting
 “ only from interest; so that were it not for the
 “ many favours emaning from the throne, they
 “ would not move a finger. Another, and rather
 “ worse, inconveniency annexed to the crown, is
 “ the impossibility for kings to distinguish honest
 “ men from those of a different cast. They are
 “ so like each other, as to be generally mistaken;
 “ for at court vice and virtue appear in the same
 “ colours. The bulk of those about me, I strong-
 “ ly suspect to be void of any one generous prin-
 “ ciple; but when I am for sisting them, my
 “ rank will not allow of the proper measures.
 “ Thus they remain impenetrable to me, yet I
 “ must employ them in the service of the state;
 “ and hence arise those public misfortunes, for
 “ which I am answerable both to the present time
 “ and to posterity.

“ When some important choice is to be made,
 “ and I have pitched on the person, all France
 “ seems to lay their heads together to deceive me.
 “ His talents, his merit and virtue, are cried up
 “ to me; not one honest man do I meet with in
 “ the kingdom to mention a word of any fault of
 “ his; they are afraid of incurring the displeasure
 “ of him whom I have so recently distinguished
 “ by my favour; and to this mean spirited fear
 “ they sacrifice both me and the state.

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“ When, on the other hand, I withdraw my confidence from a minister, or some other placeman, then I am told that he is deficient in every political quality: those very persons who could never say enough in his praise, now draw him in the most contemptible colours; all his faults and errors, and sinister practices, are laid open to me in full detail. The terrible accounts given of him from all hands set me against him, so that I cannot bring myself to employ him, even though, by the reflections on his past conduct and disgrace, he should afterwards become thoroughly qualified for a public station.

“ A patriot King is the most unhappy mortal under the sun; he has his country's happiness at heart, and is beset by people who cross his good intentions. The ministers are the first in ruining a state, to save themselves the labour of reforming abuses: to leave things as they are, is soonest done; in the mean time, the evils continue, and when a Monarch, tender of the welfare of his subjects, would remedy them, he meets unsurmountable impediments, for the habit of a long and bad administration at length comes to supersede the laws and usages, &c. &c.

Another time Lewis XV. was pleased to open himself to me on the same subject: “ A great misfortune to a King is, that ministers generally conceal the true state of things from them. Sovereigns are always made acquainted with the calamities of their dominions the last; and this, lest such informations should put them on taking the reins of government into their own hands; and every one makes it his study to keep them in the dark. The immense variety of concerns in a large monarchy, obliges him to trust to ministers,

“ nisters, and these ministers, for the greater part,
 “ play false with him. On the last war, I con-
 “ sulted those who were at the head of the ad-
 “ ministration, whether the advantages of victo-
 “ ries would balance the inevitable misfortunes
 “ of battles : one and all assured me, that by no
 “ other way could the kingdom be retrieved, than
 “ by the glory of my arms ; and that the lustre
 “ and advantages derived from the victories, would
 “ be the more lasting and solid, as due only to
 “ the nation’s own strength.

“ At the peace, I found they had deceived me ;
 “ my subjects are in the utmost distress, and all
 “ owing to the war ; so that to recover them-
 “ selves must be the work of years ; and should
 “ fresh disturbances happen, it will never be
 “ done, &c. &c.

I likewise had my complaints. “ Sir, said I to
 “ the King, my grievances, though of a different
 “ nature from yours, are not less painful. The
 “ rancour of all France is pointed at me. The
 “ royal family inveighs against me ; his royal High-
 “ ness the Dauphin takes all opportunities of af-
 “ fronting me : your ministers look on me as the
 “ fatal rock on which all their designs go to wreck.
 “ The chief families of the kingdom treat me with
 “ contempt ; and all this because your Majesty
 “ has thought me worthy of your esteem.

“ Many carry their malevolence so far, as to
 “ impute the disorders of the finances to me, as
 “ if the administration of affairs was lodged in
 “ my hands. I am accused of having all the
 “ money in the kingdom ; I am charged with
 “ the nation’s debts, as if I myself had contract-
 “ ed them. On any minister’s failing in his du-
 “ ty, the blame is immediately laid on me. I am
 “ exclaimed against for his being preferred, and
 “ his disgrace is imputed as a crime to me.

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Marchioness of POMPADOUR. 137

" It is I who bear the blame of all political misfortunes; and if I have not been directly accused of having declared war against your enemies, it has been said, that I might have prevented those murderous sieges and battles, as if the fate of Europe was at my beck, and I could model foreign courts.

" I have been reproached with the oversights of your generals; not a battle has been lost, not a siege has been raised, but it is all owing to me. Even their personal variances and quarrels are laid at my door.

" The public distresses, though the consequence of a bad administration, and the misfortunes of the times, have been attributed to me, as if my doing. The populace has hissed me, and was often for stopping my coach, and has been near coming to those extremities against me, with which they only are treated whose notorious malversation manifestly has ruined a people.

" Yet, Sire, what gives me most pain, is the ingratitude of those who have felt the effects of my favour. I have often solicited your Majesty for persons, who were no sooner out of the meanness and obscurity from whence I drew them, than they forgot the kind hand by which they had been raised. I can reckon, hitherto, about three thousand persons who owe their subsistence to me. It is through my care that they have been brought into new stations, where they lost sight of me before they were well warm in their places.

" Of such a great number, not one have I found with any due sense of gratitude; nay, the greater the preferment, the less their acknowledgment; some have even busily caballed against me: those whom I thought most my friends, and whom the important services I

" had

“ had done them should have made such, have
 “ been the first in deceiving and injuring me. I
 “ have discovered treacheries at which I shudder-
 “ ed; so that since my living at court, I am
 “ grown sick of mankind. I should have died a
 “ thousand times under the anguish which such
 “ injurious treatment has caused me, had not
 “ the kindness with which your Majesty honours
 “ me reconciled me to life, &c.”

* The death of the Prince of Wales, eldest son to George II. and as such, presumptive heir to the crown of England, made some impression at Versailles: this Prince is said not to have been remarkable for those eminent qualities with whose brilliancy the world is so much taken: but they who knew him personally perceived in him the more solid virtues: compassion, goodness, sensibility, tenderness, candour, affability, a readiness to oblige, and delight in doing good; these were his leading dispositions: a Prince, in a word, qualified to make a people happy. He had married a German Princess, intirely deserving to ascend the throne with him. I have often pitied this Lady's fate, to lose an affectionate husband and a powerful crown at once, is one of those events which elevated souls alone can bear with firmness. His death occasioned a revolution in political affairs. France had great hopes of things going better, when that Prince should have come to the throne: there was no cordial harmony between him and his father King George. The son often crossed the father's measures, so that they seldom saw, and seldomer spoke to each other. From this disposition it was hoped, that a Prince, who so much disapproved the present system, would be less inveterate against the house

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of Bourbon than his predecessors had been. It was imagined that his accession would prove a happy turn for France, when, perhaps, it might have only made matters worse. The sons of Kings, at their entrance on regality, leave their ideas as Princes at the foot of the throne, and take up those of Kings.

George II. is said not to have shewn any great concern at the death of his son, appearing as usual in the drawing-room, and, within a few days, giving audience to Ambassadors: in this there might be a little affectation, it being the known character of that Prince to shew himself firm and unshaken, in the midst of the most unfortunate events. The rest of the royal family were in the deepest affliction: he was also greatly lamented by his household; and I am told, that his death is still matter of concern to many.

The death of this Prince likewise caused a national uneasiness, his children being very young, and King George advanced in years, which might be productive of the disorders almost inevitable under a minority. In order to prevent them, the Princess Dowager of Wales was nominated guardian to the King's successor, and regent to the kingdom, till her son should be of age; but the issue of the deliberation was, that this Lady, who had come into England to wear the crown, should be neither Queen nor Regent.

The French clergy's affair, though thought to be over, was still going on. The bishops and wealthy incumbents, amidst the privacy of their dwellings, to which they had been ordered, disturbed the state; though ardently desirous of returning to Paris, they were for coming at this privilege as cheap as they could, haggling a long time with the King, who, however, would make no abatement. They insisted on their immunities, they

they pleaded their solemn promise to the Pope to maintain their rights. This dispute irritated the court, and not a little soured the King. At this juncture, a bishop took it into his head to come and expostulate with me about the clergy's prerogatives. This certainly was not taking the right time, for as this affair gave so much displeasure to his Majesty, it could not be very pleasing to me. The Prelate made a long-winded harangue, in proof that the church was not to dis seize itself of its wealth. He recurred as far back as St. Peter, and through an enumeration of those bulls, by which the church is ordered to keep what it has, came down to our times. "My Lord, said I interrupting him, your prerogatives are what I know nothing of, but I know that your chief duty, like that of other subjects, is to obey the King. Say what you will of your bulls and immunities; every body of men declining to conform to its Sovereign's orders, is guilty of rebellion, and deserves the punishment of high treason."

A great many bad books came out against the clergy, in vindication of the King's cause. Among the several writers who, on these occasions take different parts, one wrote a pamphlet with the title of *An Impartial Inquiry into the Immunities of the Clergy*. This work was full of very judicious reflections, besides a nervous elegance of style: it was indeed the only one on the subject which deserves reading.

After all, it became necessary that the plan which had been proposed, and to which I myself had advised the King, should take place. This was to draw up a state of the value of every churchman's preferments, that each might be taxed in proportion to his real income; and accordingly the court ordered the intendants of the provinces

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vinces to oblige all the beneficed clergy to deliver in an account of the nature of their several revenues. There was indeed a very hard clause, in case of a refusal; the intendants being expressly enjoined to seize on the several revenues in the King's name, and leave the beneficiaries only an alimentary pension. This was insuring their compliance; for being used to superfluity, they could but very indifferently shift with no more than was necessary.

The clergy of France had already begun to lower their voice, when the parliament of Paris raised theirs. I could find in my heart to say, that in France the state is ever out of order; no sooner has the Sovereign repaired some weak part of his prerogative, than another appears to be running to ruin.

The parliament, instead of conforming to his pleasure, according to their usual way, sent a deputation with remonstrances. These speeches set out with great protestations of respect and submission, but are seldom without some term which favours of a republican spirit, tending to independency; and not seldom they strike at the prerogative of the crown.

The King though naturally irresolute, had his intervals of firmness, in which he was immovable. He gave the deputies to understand, that he would have his edicts enrolled that very day, under penalty of disobedience and immediate punishment.

The parliament were sitting when the deputies returned to Paris; being forbid to deliberate, they registered the edicts. After this act of duty, which they stilled deference, a second deputation was dispatched to Versailles. These gentlemen began their harangue in this manner: *Your*

Majesty

Majesty has commanded, and your parliament has obeyed.

A courtier said, that there they ought to have stopped, all the remainder of their long speech being quite useless and superfluous.

The King was pleased, in the evening, to mention this affair to me; and his having got the better of the parliament, made him much gayer than usual; but this extraordinary chearfulness raised in me some misgivings. To me, a body whose temporary submission excited in its master such a lively joy, appeared dangerous.

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